SETH WAY

BY

Caroline Dale Owen

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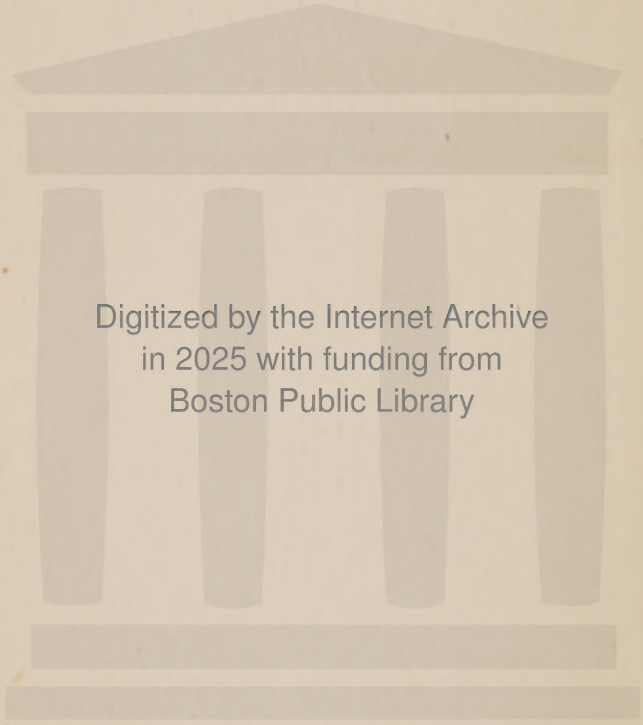
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SETH WAY

A Romance of the New Harmony Community

WHAT A SOUND WE HEARD NOW!

SETH WAY

A Romance of the New Harmony Community

BY

CAROLINE DALE OWEN

(MRS. CHARLES H. SNEDEKER)

With Illustrations by Franklin Booth

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1917

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Published November 1917

TO MY HUSBAND
CHARLES HENRY SNEDEKER
IN GRATITUDE FOR CONSTANT
SYMPATHY AND COUNSEL

FOREWORD

All the improbable things in this story are true. The probable ones were invented by me.

In character and scientific attainments the hero is Thomas Say. But I have not dared to make his character so perfect nor his attainment so swift as were Say's. In fiction they would not be believed.

As to the girl of the story, she is almost entirely drawn from a good and beautiful woman who lived in Harmony, and who undertook the headlong, unselfish enterprises which I have described.

The little girl, Columbine Neef, is my own mother set back a generation. I have referred to no other persons by fictitious names. The other characters are either pure fiction or actual Harmony people bearing their real names.

For the story of the New Harmony Community I am chiefly indebted to my dear grandmother, at whose knee I learned it, and who made the bright Community days more real to me than my own childhood.

C. D. O.

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SETH WAY

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH I ASSIST AT A CONCERT

THE scene is so far back in my childhood that the surrounding air seems a shadowy dusk, and myself an unreal little Scot about three feet high, wearing the tartan skirt with the plaidie over one shoulder — surely it was not the present I.

We had come to the old town of Lanark to visit my mother's kin, the McNiffs. My Quaker father had decided to emigrate to the United States. He could not feel satisfied save in a purely Quaker city where the Spirit could move unhampered; and such a city was Philadelphia. My father was a visionary: yes, in the true sense of that word; for he saw visions and had trances which were famous among our little circle of Friends. I remember that even then I regarded his visions with distrust. I

had seen him in one of them. His set and lacking eyes had filled me with terror. He said he had been to heaven and described the place. This gave to my childish mind a contempt for the notion of heaven which yet reacts upon me with chill.

My mother had no such will-o'-the-wisp luring her to America. We were well-placed in Scotland. She desired to stay there. It was hard to fare across the water with no quest. I think I pitied my mother for that parting, though it may be that her after misfortunes tinge my recollection at this point. She was come now to bid a last good-bye to her old mother and brother.

I meanwhile was meeting for the first time my small cousin Wully McNiff. His broad-cheeked face, with its continual "girn," had quickly fascinated me. Wully's real power lay in a certain pixy mentality. Wully could open new realms — and did!

I had not been in the house an hour before he led me out into the copse beside the road.

"Seth, did ever ye skirl the pipes?"

"Naw," I admitted.

"But I can, fine."

"Dae they let ye hae the bagpipes in yer own haund?" I asked with awe.

"They dinna, I inveented ane."

The marvel of this kept me silent.

"Ye dinna spier what I make it o'," said Wully impatiently.

I "spiered."

"It's made like a fiddle, out o' a cat! If I make ane an' play, will ye sing? Sing 'Tibbie Fowler o' the Glen,' or, 'There's nae luck aboot the hoos'?"

"I ken 'The Cawmills are comin',' " I ventured.

"That'll dae," said Wully.

It took him but a second to catch the cat. I think all animals would have come at his beck, no matter how cruelly he used them. He thrust her under his arm with her head and fore-claws toward his back, tossed his plaid over one shoulder and started jauntily across the road, stepping to a hidden tune.

We came under the window. The folk inside were in serious conversation. I could hear my father admonishing and instructing. I knew it was no time for foolery.

"Can't ye sing?" whispered Wully. "Sing, I tell ye!"

"*The Cawmills are comin'!*" I yelled at the top of my voice, and with that the strange elf beside me pinched the tail of his instrument, controlling the unhappy howls by well-timed elbow pressures to the proper rhythm of the tune — a most unholy minstrelsy.

The folk in the house jumped to their feet. Chairs were overturned.

"It's the warlocks!" cried Jeannie McNiff.

"Eh, Jean," cried her mother. "Dinna ye ken Wully by this time?" And she swooped out upon us so swiftly that before I could blink she had caught us both.

"I'll whup ye good the noo!" she announced.

Wully's "girn" only widened.

"Och, an' ye don't care a mite for it!" she cried desperately. "I'll tell ye, I'll dae waur nor thot."

I held my breath at the penalty forthcoming.

"Ye'll bide hame frae the skule" — then seeing the effect, "Ye'll keep hame a week, ye wull!"

Had Wully suddenly gone crazy? Here he was crouch-

ing down, lifting his freckled nose in air with more pitiful howling than ever cat let forth!

"Oh, nae, nae, nae, mither," he wailed.

"Hurtin' the puir cat-body that never did ye no harm. I'll hurt *ye* now a mite."

"Oh, I maun gae to skule, I maun gae to skule!" cried Wully.

I had "gone to skule" myself and knew what it was, the high narrow benches which brought aches even to my strong little back, the dirty books with never a picture, the lessons without meaning, the terrifying whack coming like thunderclap upon wrong answer — these made school the chief bugbear of my existence.

But Wully begged so pitifully to go, was so earnest in his promises for better behavior that his mother let him off with a day's absence.

We crept back to the copse. My respect for Wully was fast becoming contempt.

"Whatever made ye sic a fule?" I asked.

"Mr. Owen 'ul know," he hiccoughed miserably.

"Is it nine-tails he beats ye with, this schoolmaster?"

"Mr. Owen's no' the schoolmaster. He's the owner o' the mills," said Wully loftily. "Did ye never hear o' him?"

I shook my head.

"Ye don't ken much," sniffed Wully.

CHAPTER II

IN WHICH I SEE ROBERT OWEN

I KNOW not what heartless boy-curiosity prompted me to go with Wully when at last he returned to school. It would be no light thing to witness the punishment that was sure to overwhelm so reckless a spirit. The road from Old to New Lanark and the mills led between stone walls through a bare, treeless country. As we trudged along, I could not but note with envy the steadiness of Wully's courage. He even whistled to himself and glanced at me with infinite mischief out of the corner of his eye.

"Whaur be yer books?" I asked.

"I lost 'em," Wully answered with an astonishing "girn."

Now the Clyde, which had been loud in our ears all the way, grew louder yet, and its sound was mingled with a great humming. The gray, homely mills were all about us. It was the first time I had heard the roar of machinery and its power frightened me a little.

Owen, the man who owned all this — what a terrible figure he must be!

We entered the farthest gray building. Wully led me through the entrance-hall, and suddenly we came upon a sun-filled, open court and the strangest, prettiest scene I had ever witnessed in my short Scotch life.

Looking back at it now so far away it seems like a bright scrap of some Paradise garden where babies grew instead of flowers. Babies were everywhere, — round

babies, tall babies, fairy babies with wonder-faces, and roly-poly babies all of this world.

Every one was laughing, chatting, or clapping hands. They were barely able to toddle and none were above four years old.

They were dressed in clean cotton shifts — so I thought then. I learned later that it was a Greek costume. In the midst was a wholesome young girl of seventeen loving them like some symbol figure of Charity.

"But this is no' a skule," I found voice to say.

"Then get anither name for 't," answered Wully. "Let's gae o'er and see what Miss Molly's got."

Miss Molly had a brown lark — was holding it in her hands while the children crowded around to see.

"It hurt its leg," she explained to Wully quite as if he were a grown-up. I remember wondering at this among all the other wonders of that day.

"And we cured it, did n't we, Katie?"

Tiny Kate nodded her head.

"And now we're e'en going to let her go."

Katie's lip curled tremulously.

"I dinna want her to gae," she cried hardily; "I want the lavrock bide wi' us!"

I saw a puzzled look pass over Miss Molly's face. She seemed to be feeling her way to some reply. Then she put the lark back into its cage and took both Katie's hands, holding them tightly together.

"Now, Katie, the wee lavrock feels just like this. She canna spread her wings" (she spread the little arms a moment); "she canna fly to her hame up in the sky, an' talk with ither lavrocks. She maun bide still, still!"

Katie stood so for several minutes, her hands closed in

Miss Molly's. It was strange to see the wee battle going on in the baby face. But childish victories are apt to be lavish when won at all.

"Let the birdie gae free the noo, the noo!" cried Katie, pulling her hands free.

The other children crowded around closer than before. Miss Molly carefully put her hand into the cage and brought forth the trembling bird. One baby toddler secretly put down a rosy mouth and kissed the tip of the tail feathers which peeped from Miss Molly's hand.

Urchin though I was, beyond the magic of babyhood, I knew that the little one was touching something that was soon to be one with cloud and star and all the airy mystery of the sky.

Then Miss Molly tossed the lavrock upward.

Wonderful how instantly it found wing, swept up in clear control, then circled and circled, and, probably from the reflex of this action, æon-old in conjunction with song, it broke into showery singing. Never shall I forget that picture, the rosy upturned faces, the bird, the sunny sky.

Wully took my hand. We reëntered the corridor. A flock of merry youngsters were clattering up the stairway. They were the older children of Mr. Owen's mill-hands. We joined them, but Wully was very solemn. I saw him gulp twice, then he said to me: "That cat! Happen the tail-pinch hurted her."

"Cats dinna hae feelin's like us!" I voiced the boy theory, but for the first time wavered in belief.

"But Mr. Owen?" I asked fearfully, — "will he be up in the skuleroom?"

The next instant I altogether forgot Mr. Owen and the cat.

We were in a large, lofty room, lighted with tall, many-paned windows. Across the walls and windows midway stretched a double row of great pictures, animals colored to life and seemingly life-size. There was a prancing horse, a wolf, an elephant, an astonishing giraffe, and a boa-constrictor lifting its head to feed from the top of a tall palm. I have since questioned the accuracy of this latter presentation.

But there must then have entered me something of the passion of my life study. I was unacquainted with pictures of any sort. Here were the first illustrations of zoölogy that had ever met my eye. My head swam with overpowering interest.

Wully pulled my shoulder.

"Sit doon," he commanded. "We're goin' to have geography the noo."

"I hate geography," I answered.

"Och, ye ken juist — naethin'," said Wully desperately, for I had afforded him not even one exclamation of surprise.

The children had now plunged into the geography game which has been so often described by visitors to the school. That is, I was aware of the game, but my eyes were constantly on the animals. I was conscious of a little girl on the front platform holding a long white wand and pointing to different places on a map. It was a huge map covering all one end of the room.

I was aware, too, of the tense interest when some child called out a place which the girl hesitated in finding, and the shout of approbation when she did find it. Finally, a

lad, who had named a sea which she could not point out, marched up to take the wand and in turn stand the testing of his fellows.

By this time I was counting the stripes on the zebra's body. There were just twenty-two including the broken ones toward the hind legs.

Then the chairs were pushed back, and a little orchestra took a corner and began a rousing reel. Wully, I should have said, had doffed his kilt for the white Greek costume, and like Pan himself he looked in it. Most of the children were thus dressed, though a few destined for a hornpipe wore the brightest of kilts.

Then the little bare feet began to twinkle hither and yon, and as the dance grew swift the high, sweet childhood laughter filled the place. Shy as I was, the teacher had me out among the rest. They were exquisite dancers, these poor children of the mills. They had been trained since the age of two. I among them was a creature all heels and elbows, but so instant and understanding was the kindness shown me that I danced happily.

Then, after some singing of Scottish songs, we went downstairs. As we turned again into the court, the place of the babies, I was aware of some stir among the children.

"Mr. Owen's coomin'," went up the cry. "He's cam ben already."

My heart sank. Somehow I no longer wanted to see Wully get his thrashing. And, simpleton that I was, I had not yet associated the curious gladness of the school (this first of its kind) with the mill owner himself. I know not what bug-a-boo I expected.

Then he came among us with a swift, short-stepping

gait, his large-featured face fresh-colored like a boy's and smiling with a most outreaching affection. He seemed to love us all as his own children.

The babies ran to him catching his hands, pulling his coat, reaching up tiny palms to him, folding and unfolding their little fingers in impatience to be taken, and one tinylet too small to walk endeavored to get forward along the wall, chattering her baby purpose earnestly to herself.

Robert Owen hurried to her, sweeping her up in his arms. I saw his homely face redden with pleasure as if he had won great praise. Then he caught sight of Wully!

"Why, William," he said, "I've missed you from school. Where have you been these days?"

I saw Wully's face as if a white veil had been let down over it. He answered not a word. I may have felt pity before, but this is my first recollection of that emotion.

"He made a cat o' bagpipe," I burst out. "It was na sae bad, thot. An' he did n't mean it."

"William will answer for himself, I'm sure," said Owen, putting down the little child and taking Wully's hand.

"It *waur* bad," said Wully loudly. "It hurted the cat an' brak oop my mither's party."

"Did you realize this at the time, my son — did you think of it, I mean?"

"Oh, nae, sir. I niver thocht aboot a cat that way ava."

"But you do now. I am quite sure you will not do it again. It is all purely a matter of understanding."

"Oh, nae, sir; nae, sir!"

Was this the pixy Wully, with this soft human look on his freckled face, clinging with painful shyness to the grown-up hand?

And so the picture fades.

CHAPTER III

IN WHICH I SEE THE MOON

We sailed to America in a brig and a stormy voyage we had of it. After we had been in Philadelphia a sixmonth my father died. He makes a rather stern, eerie figure as I recollect him. But I know my estimate of him must be false, for my mother's joy in him and her treasuring of his love is the one sweet thing I recall in her life.

Mother was alone and frightened in the strange land, and it seemed a piece of good fortune when the strong and handsome Bill Swently made her an offer of marriage. He was just starting to take up land in Western Virginia and he needed a wife.

So we came West with two pack-horses — a voyage through the Allegheny wilderness; slow toilings in forest depths, sweet-smelling, dusky, endless; day-long climbs with sudden reachings of height, views where the fathomless billows of tree-tops flowed to the horizon. It was an adventure to delight the heart of a boy. But for me it was so marred with the beatings and cursings of my brutal stepfather that I remember nothing else. I can still see my mother cowering pitifully on her horse and uttering no word in my defense.

So my life clouded and darkened. Any growing thought that had stirred within me that day at the Lanark School settled down into silence. I grew too dull even to hunger for better things.

I fear I never have forgiven Bill Swently. At the men-

tion of his name a mental nausea arises in me. I judge it to be the extreme of anger. And I have not yet conquered it. I think he killed my mother, and I know he killed my mother's companionship with me.

I lived my childhood in lonely mountain places. Bill Swently's rule was "When ye kin hear your neighbor's gun, move furder." So deeper and deeper in the wilderness we reared and abandoned our rude huts. The dark forest swept up to our door, engulfed us, and passed on to the unknown. I forgot Scotland. The forest seemed to me to cover the world.

We ourselves grew solitary and mute. The appearing of a stranger filled me with a curious fear which made me dive instantly into the forest. I have seen beavers dive so at the cracking of a twig. But the stranger-faces that I oftenest saw were those of the children brought into the world by my poor mother. I remember digging a grave for one of these little ones. It had been with us about six months. My mother and I fetched a stone to set at the head. We worked together silently and did not weep. But the sternness of the task entered my soul and made me strangely wise.

My daily toil was heavy. I chopped the wood when I could barely lift the axe. I fetched water from the "draft," as we called it, which was always near our door. How well I remember the voice of those old streams sounding through the night. I planted and tended our little patch, and on rainy days sat listless and received the maledictions of Bill Swently.

When I grew older the woods received me. I roamed all day with my gun. I began to learn the lives of animals through depriving them of life. I knew where to find their

tracks in the snow and by the streams. I learned their burrows and nests, when their young would be born and how they cared for them. I learned their curious cleverness and their still more curious lapses. But I saw no significance and no beauty in the things that I learned. No sunrise made me pause with stroke of joy; no habit of deer or bird, no growth of tree caused me to wonder.

Only once do I remember wondering "Why?" with a disturbing sense of knowledge beyond me and with a puzzling delight.

One evening at dusk I sat out in front of the cabin skinning a deer by the light of a rude lantern, stripping off the only garment the beautiful creature had ever worn. The task irked me after my long day of hunt. Our cabin was near the edge of an open ravine. Presently I saw the full moon come up and blessed it because it helped the lantern.

As I spread the skin upon the ground, I noticed the moon. It was but three quarters. I stared at it.

"Be I crazy?" I asked. For like all woodsmen I talked to myself. I ran to the cabin.

"Ma," I called, "hain't the moon full to-night?"

"Caant ye look yersel, ye loon?" she responded.

"It war full when it riz," I asserted, "but suthin's happened!"

She came out and instantly threw up both hands.

"Oh, Lord!" she cried, "the baby's goin' to die!"

Bill Swently came out and swore at it; so I knew that he, too, was scared.

But I did not catch their fright. I was too interested. I could not make the connection between the baby, pitifully unimportant in our household, and this so great

marvel. The judgment-terrors of the preachers did not occur to me. I crept along the ravine to get away from the noise, and watched the moon with the first reverence I had ever felt. It grew slenderer until the last thread of the crescent disappeared.

Then I perceived that the ghostly disk still hung there, changing the whole aspect of the sky by its look of death. Was it consuming before my eyes? Was it subject to some disease? Could some veil have passed in front of it? Would it disappear entirely?

Suddenly the thread of light appeared on the opposite side. I watched it for hours until the disk shone perfect again in the heavens; and I was left trying to fit the marvel into my little cosmos. It was my first experience of divine curiosity, a curiosity which never quite left me and which henceforth deepened my loneliness with a sense of baffling and shame.[1]

[1] Note by Seth Way:
Here my narrative is interrupted and is taken in hand by my daughter, for whose pleasure I am writing down these memories of my boyhood.

CHAPTER IV

MY DAUGHTER COLUMBINE EXPLAINS

Father had come thus far in his narrative when a box of fossil shells and crinoids arrived from Mr. Lesueur by the hand of Allan Curtis. I had it brought in.

Father looked up from his desk with shining eyes. Such boxes arrive, four or five of them in the year, but father always receives them with this same enthusiasm. I saw his dear hands tremble as he lifted the lid. Then he broke the seal of the accompanying letter and was lost in the close script.

"Only think, daughter," he cried, "Lesueur has sent me this only known specimen!" He fingered eagerly in the box and brought forth a tiny Silurian plant.

"He found it on the shores of Lake Superior — the only one in all his northern journey. What wonderful generosity!"

"But, father, you are generous, too. Don't you remember the beetle that you gave to 'Gene Micheux last spring?"

"But, Colley, dear, the lad was so eager. He is becoming a true naturalist, and the beetle partly did it. I never regret that gift."

"You never regretted any gift in your life," I said, and went out. For though I longed to see the unknown shells, I know that in the first flush father works best alone.

Father worked all that day and until three in the morning over the shells. And the next night at two I

woke out of a sound sleep, crept to his door to find light at the crack, and so dragged him off to his room. For mother is away and she never allows him to do this when she is at home.

And several mornings later when he overslept and I took his breakfast to his great canopy bed, he awoke like a disappointed child.

"I have been wastefully sleeping!" he cried. "Oh, Columbine, when I think how the entire range of North America awaits us, whole mountain chains, great coasts and rivers as yet totally untouched, their mighty secrets all unknown, it is insupportable that I should sleep."

"But, father, the mountains will wait."

"Yes, child; it is I who cannot wait. Being human, I shall be gone with a breath — and now must I eat, you say?"

"Absolutely."

"Oh," he sighed, "if I could but make a small opening in my side and insert the food, enough for a month." Then he threw back his dear brown head and laughed.

"And what if you hurt my feelings?" I asked. "I made the coffee myself, and these biscuits are my very best, Virginia Dupalais's recipe."

He caught me close, dangerously tipping the tray. "Dear child," he said; "dear child!"

That day I found the scattered leaves of his "Life" under his table where he had pushed them off to make room for the box. I gathered them up and determined to try working on it myself. I ran into the study. Father is different from all the other scientists here in Harmony. You can interrupt him and he is never angry. He only works the later at night.

"Let me write it, father," I said; "I know all the stories so well."

He sighed relief. "That's the thing. You'll do it much better than I. You have your mother's gift."

"Now, father; see how slily you slip out of it! I'm only going to do a very little of it."

I kissed him and ran out, and the next chapter is what I have written.

CHAPTER V

COLUMBINE'S NARRATIVE

I. THE ROCK-CHINKER

ONE morning in early spring, my father (that is, Seth Way) was laboring along the trace under a heavy burden of furs. He was going down to the Settlement to trade them off for cornmeal and salt.

The mountain forest was a mist of tiny leaves. Through it sounded the clear, downward call of the redbird, which broke always at the end into a chime of little bells. But Seth was swept this morning with that disgust which sometimes falls upon the young. Of late several times Seth had turned upon Bill Swently and tried to fight him. But what was the use? Would not the misery of the cabin remain? He had had notions of running away; but the lack of plan for himself and the feeling that his mother must face the turmoil alone had held him back. Yet Seth despised himself for not finding some way out.

Suddenly through the forest he heard a sound different from the redbird's note. The woodpecker he knew made a redoubtable drumming, but this was no woodpecker. It lacked the rhythmic busyness of forest creatures. Now it stopped altogether, now began, purposeful and short.

"Chink-chink, chink-chink-chink." Seth walked on for a time, listening.

"Dern it, I got to know," he said, and hurried to it through the wood.

The sound brought him to the deep gorge of Cow Pas-

ture River. Seth peeped over, saw the brawling mountain water at the bottom, and — no animal, but a man tap-tapping at the cliff with a hammer. Why a stalwart human should so occupy himself, Seth could not imagine. But how busy he was!

A backwoodsman works with a kind of impersonal swing, but this man was working with a gleeful eagerness that was almost haste. He was moving along the foot of the cliff, now picking up a fragment and cracking it open, now striking the cliff itself, and stopping at times to snatch from his pocket a book in which he wrote.

Seth clambered noiselessly down into the gorge, snapped a twig to show his presence, picked his way expertly across the stony brook, and sat down to view the thing.

"Howdy," he said.

The man, quite unstartled, straightened up from his task.

"How do you do?" he answered. "I supposed I was quite alone."

"Ye hain't ben alone in quite some time," responded Seth with scorn.

A long silence followed in which the man pecked industriously at the rock. Seth slowly noted the belted gray suit which he thought fitted too close, the curious shoulder-pack, and the still more curious hammer, very heavy on one face and long-pointed at the other.

"He must a' fund that hammer a fur way off," he decided.

The man breathed a sigh of accomplishment.

"Yes, it had to be here," he said. But whatever he had found he failed to pick up. He merely took out a round

compass, held it before him, and seemed observing an imaginary line which dipped eastward into the heart of the cliff.

"Look a here, mister," said Seth; "whut ye breakin' them rocks fur?"

The man failed to answer; apparently failed to hear. Perhaps he was accustomed to rustics curiously watching his work.

"Them ain't wuth shucks," added Seth; "I seed 'em all my life."

The man smiled. Very mild his manner was. Seth was disposed to laugh at it.

"It is just possible," returned the stranger, "that you have never seen them."

"Say, now; whut's the use o' pokin' it onto me like thet?"

"Nevertheless, it may be true," said the man, still absorbed.

"Looky here," said Seth, rising, "I hain't a blind un." And he picked up a stone to throw.

The man gave Seth his full attention.

"Dear me," he said, "I meant no unkindness. Moreover, hitting me with a stone would not prove my words untrue. We are all of us blind, my lad, to a thousand things about us which some day happier men will see. That is all I meant."

Seth sat down. "Ye do talk the quairest words. Hain't plain talk good enough fur ye?"

Something in the boy's resentment moved the man.

"I am afraid I put off your question just now," he said. "I break the rocks here because I am studying them."

"Studyin'!" laughed Seth. "Studyin''s outen a book."

The man's face suddenly radiated his dream.

"The rocks are my book," he replied; "the leaves of my book lie scattered over the world. They have been crumpled and torn, and my duty is to gather them up, place them in order, and guess at those which are lost. The most interesting book in the world is the world itself."

This was all Greek to Seth. Allegory was not common in his mountains.

The man stooped searching at the cliff base, then eagerly showed the boy his find.

"Look at this which I gather up at random."

"Why, hit's a flower," said Seth, in surprise — "a flower made out o' rock!"

"It looks like a flower, but it is really an animal."

"Whut makes ye reckon thet?"

"Because the apparent petals are arms with which it feeds itself — this central part is the stomach."

"The stomach! Great Day! Hev ye watched it eatin'?"

"No, it perished millions of years ago, but there are animals of similar form now in the sea which feed that way. The presence of this little animal here shows that this place is an ancient seashore. The so-called Silurian Sea washed the foot of these mountains. This range stood above the flood."

The boy's face showed for the first time a pondering interest. Then he rose impatiently.

"A sea, say ye — and ye fund it. But, Good Lord, whut's the use? The sea's gone. Hit cain't hurt ye, cain't do ye no good."

He flipped the fossil into the stream.

"You unconscionable egotist," remarked the man.

Seth grinned. "Ye don't even cuss like other folks, do ye, now?" he said. Then he returned to the earlier subject. "I 'low ye cain't be so sure about thet thar sea."

The man's face brightened. "That's a right attitude of mind, my boy. Always question your facts until you have proved them."

"Well, take keer yourself," was Seth's unexpected courtesy as he turned, crossed the brook, and scrambled out of sight.

"Blame fool!" he remarked, as he shouldered his furs on the trace again. "Mighty sot up, with his little rock tinkerin'."

Far down the trace he heard through the still wood the "clink, clink" of the hammer. The man was at his self-imposed task again there in his lonely, sun-flecked gorge.

At Windy Cove Seth sold his furs for the cornmeal and salt. He did not return home at once, but lingered listening to the slow talk of some hunters who had come in to trade. It was his only chance in months to hear anybody talk.

Late in the afternoon a tall form appeared from the woods up the hill.

"Who's thet?" asked a hunter.

"I seen 'im," — Seth spoke for the first time. "I seen 'im breakin' rocks up yon in Cow Pasture Gap."

"Oh, thet fool?" said another. "I heered o' him 'long by Rich Patch Mounting. Allus a-crackin' rocks. Never keeps 'em — jest chucks 'em away ag'in. Some say 'crazy.'" He lowered his voice. "But Sam McCarthy told me the feller knows a heap more'n whut's lawful — somethin' 'baout the insides o' the world an' how they wuz fust made."

"Gawd made the world in six days," announced a man with a "painter" across his saddle. "How does he git over thet?"

"Well, I don't know," whispered the other. "But he studies things out thet he hed n't oughta — thet's a heap best let alone."

The fur-trader had come out from his cabin store. "By Job, thet's so," he said. "Hey, mammy!"

Mammy was his wife, and the title became her for she boasted fifteen children. They chased the brood inside and banged the door just as the traveler came up.

"Now, if ye hed only arrove jest a leetle mite sooner," observed the backwoodsman.

Seth joined in the loud guffaw. The man's large face flushed. He knocked at the door. Mammy appeared at the loft window.

"You git out o' here," she called, "fas' as yer laigs kin carry ye!"

"My legs have carried me a long distance to-day. I'll pay you well for a night's lodging."

"Yes, an' bad luck to my house!" returned mammy from her coigne of vantage.

An urchin, reaching past her, shied a handful of pebbles at the auburn head. "Rock-a-chink! Hallo, ole Rock-a-chink!" he yelled.

To Seth's amaze the man showed no anger. He only waited for the backwoods laughter to cease, and asked the distance to the nearest cabin.

"'Baout ten mile," grinned one of the hunters. Then, the amusement over, the three rode off.

The rock-man sat down by the roadside, elbows on knees, his forehead resting on his hands. He seemed sud-

denly weary and looked older than before in the gorge. Seth did not speak; but finally his long stare caught the notice of the man.

"What, you again, lad? You have a most unaccountable way of springing out of the ground."

"Be ye afraid to sleep in the woods?" asked Seth. "Hain't ye got a gun?"

"I am not afraid of the open, but I am hungry and my rations are out."

Seth vouchsafed no sympathy.

Presently the traveler said: "Lad, can I not go home with you? I see you have a bag of meal. I will give very little trouble."

"No, ye cain't," said Seth roughly.

"I suppose you are afraid, too. Always the fear of the new — the fear of the new. How it does keep its hold on men!" He shook his head thoughtfully.

"I hain't fear'd o' yu," said Seth.

"Then perhaps you are short of food. I will give you money to buy more."

"We got a plenty. I shot a deer yis'day. I only don't want ye."

"Yet I think I will have to go with you." The man spoke gently, but with a firmness which the boy found no way to resist. Sullenly Seth shouldered his burdens; but his silence had already given consent.

"Here, lad, give me the salt," said the traveler. "There's no need of your carrying the whole 'blaud,' as we used to say in Scotland."

"I can tote it all right."

"Yes, but young backs must not be strained too far," said the man, possessing himself of the sack. "In three

or four years, from the looks of you, you'll be fit to carry the sack and me, too."

Seth walked ahead up the steep trace. He could not himself understand the storm in his heart. He had long felt the misery of the cabin, but never before its shame. The two covered in silence the five miles which was the real distance. Once at a river the traveler stopped to scrutinize the bare washed rocks, once at a cliff he stopped again. Each time Seth walked ahead and the traveler had to catch up as best he could.

They reached the cabin at twilight.

"Maw!" called Seth prudently from without. "Come out hyar."

A cross voice called back. "I hain't no time to tend no creeter now. You skin 'im an' I'll roast 'im in the mornin'."

"Conscience!" laughed the man, "but I've come to an unchancy place."

The woman's lean form darkened the doorway. "Wha's oot theer?" she demanded.

"I'm self-invited, madam. If you can let me sup with you, I will pay you and give little trouble." The traveler spoke so hastily that he said "sup wi ye," also the word "trouble" trilled on his tongue.

The woman came out in the half dark and caught him by both arms. "Wha be ye?" she asked sharply.

"William Maclure is my name, madam."

"Ye'll be a Scot. Sure an' ye'll be a Scot!"

"Evidently we be 'a' Scots thegither,'" said the man, kindly dropping into the brogue. "I'm frae Ayre."

"Frae Ayre!" she repeated, "frae Ayre! Coom ben! I'll hae yer sup in a meenut."

She bustled about the cabin building up the fire. "Seth, ye loon, git more wood," she called.

Bill Swently began to grumble, but she gave no heed. The visitor, taking off his pack, sat down by the fire. Seth, returning after some activity with the axe, found the scared, towhead children gazing in a row at the stranger, who opened his pack and brought forth a string of bright beads.

"I brought these to amuse the Indians. Are you, by any chance, an Indian?" he asked seriously, laying it about the neck of the nearest little girl. The child made off like a squirrel with her prize. Maclure then brought forth from his pocket a magnet. The children watched with fascination while his knife and their own pothooks clung to the magic thing. Seth pretended not to see.

"Don't ye be fillin' up the children with yer tricks an' fictions," growled Bill.

"I will not," returned Maclure. "They'll get enough fiction from human society without any addition from me. Besides, truths are so much more interesting."

CHAPTER VI

COLUMBINE'S NARRATIVE

II. THE GREAT REQUEST

NEXT morning Seth hurried off with his gun, and Maclure, after arranging to spend some nights at the cabin, went to his odd business in the gorge. But afternoon found Seth with a fat turkey across his shoulder sitting by Cow Pasture again staring at the man at his work.

"Whut's thet contraption ye showed the younkers last night?" he demanded.

Maclure stopped his activity to open his pack and bring forth the magnet with some crystals of specular iron. Seth played with them a long while, placed them back in the pack, and began staring again. When Maclure moved down the gorge Seth rose and moved after him.

"Are you growing interested in the rocks, lad?" asked Maclure at last.

"No," said Seth mildly. "I'm only watchin' your dern foolishness."

Next day Maclure worked still farther down the gap. And again the boy was there.

"See here," said Maclure, growing conscious of the fixed gaze, "suppose you stare awhile at this hole in the rock of the river-bed and try to think how it was made."

Seth transferred his look. "Wa'n't it allus thar?" he asked.

"Of course not. That is the first silly question you have asked."

Seth began to work at the problem. "Hit's like a leetle well," he observed. "Might a' bin made by Indians, only 't would n't be no use to 'em hyar in the water."

"First guess," said Maclure, busy now with a large, fluttering map upon which he was trying to write.

"Why, thar's a round stone in the bottom o' the thing. Hain't that got suthin' to do with it?"

"It certainly has had something to do with it for a great many years."

"Say, mister, the water comes pilin' down hyar in the spring like hell."

"I suppose so."

"But water's softer'n fur. Could n't even scratch a rock."

"Could it not?"

"Lord, no!"

"Not by itself. It has its graving-tool. The stone there is its tool. That, my lad, is the first thing to learn — the enormous power of water. Water has carved out this whole gorge in which we stand and has shaped all these mountains and hills out of masses of hard rock immeasurably higher."

Seth's eyes grew dark. "How do ye know all them fancies?"

Maclure folded his map and came down to the stream. He explained how the pot-hole had been made, how the stone in the bottom had whirled under the force of the water.

"When we find such pot-holes in the sides of cliffs far from any stream, we judge that we have come upon an old stream-bed. Does that seem allowable, laddie?"

"I reckon so," Seth agreed.

Together they descended to where the stream ran quiet and broad in a "cove."

"Oh," said Maclure, like an eager boy; "do you want to see another clear page of my book, right at hand?" He pointed out to Seth on the banks of the stream the gravel, sand, clay, each sorted apart by itself.

"Have you seen the sea?" Maclure asked.

"I was on it onct in a ship, an' sick enough I was."

"I meant the shore of it. The sea is the great, restless housewife of the world. She is never satisfied until the last bit of furniture of her million shores is all sorted as to size, weight, and shape. I have seen old scallop heaps left by Indians on a beach, arranged by Mistress Sea, each shell thin edge upward, each within each as neat as spoons or plates on a pantry shelf. Where a boulder intervened, she became fanciful and made exquisite patterns of her shells, whorls within whorls about the stone.

"The bed of the sea beneath the water is the same, all materials sorted — the refuse shells of her mollusks, the clay brought down by her rivers, the sand.

"Sometimes in the midst of her great task the sea pauses, then begins again. You can trace her stoppings and her beginnings and you know that each has meant some enormous catastrophe, some rising or sinking of the earth's surface."

He paused awhile, then added:

"Wherever you see such sorted material in narrow beds, you know that a stream like this must have run. But where you meet these sortings in vast fields, you guess the ancient presence of the sea. Our whole continent of North America was laid down by the sea in just this way."

Seth's blue eyes rested a long while on the stream's

stratified edge before he exclaimed appreciatively, "Hit must a' took a hell of a time!"

Maclure's ruddy face took on a ruddier hue.

"See here, my lad," he said, "if I were you, I would not so frequently mention a place which is a most disagreeable conceit of fancy, and which, anyway, does not exist."

"No hell, say ye? How did ye find thet out? Hev ye ben thar — whar it ort to be?"

"No; I found it out as I did the origin of the pot-hole, by reasoning a little about it. The soul, which is the only part of you which could go to hell, is not subject to the action of heat."

Seth sighed. "I wish ye'd talk straight," he said. "Sometimes thar's a glimmer o' sense in whut ye say, and then ag'in th' ain't."

That night at the cabin Maclure decided that he had been talking to deaf ears. The boy avoided any further speech with him. As they sat in the firelight Bill Swently's suspicious eyes were constantly upon him. The mother, too, after her first outburst of Scotch, now kept a morose tolerance. No doubt Maclure's distaste for the Infernal had been discussed and had bred suspicion among them. Maclure was a genial man. In this lonely place he found their disapproval trying.

Maclure's work now led him to the crest of the ridge where the archaic rock meets the secondary. This was the most important line of junction on the eastern seaboard and he was spending infinite care upon it. Several days passed, but he scarcely saw the boy even in the cabin. But one afternoon, working on the crest, Maclure heard a distant halloo, then a crashing in the bushes of the slope, and then Seth's flushed face appeared over a ledge.

"I fund it! I fund it!" he cried, out of breath.

Maclure roused himself unwillingly from his notebook. "Found — what?"

"Thet pot-hole thing ye talked on. Yis'day I made out ye did n't know a blame thing about it. But this mornin' way up the clift o' Boon Gap, thar was a pot-hole right whar you 'lowed the ole crick must a' bin."

"Indeed," said Maclure.

"An' furder along, foot o' Bull Pasture Hills, I come acrost all these hyar gimcracks." He took from his jacket a handful of fossil corals. For in that region of Virginia the rock is so full of fossils that they shake out, and madrepores and terebinths are to be picked up by the handful.

"These hyar hain't like your'n," observed Seth, spreading them out in his palms.

Maclure noted that the boyish hands trembled. "What do you mean, lad?"

"Your shells, whut ye fund in Cow Pasture. They're diff'rent."

"Tell me the difference."

"Don't ye see these hyar hain't got fancy marks like your shells, an' these flower things whut ain't flowers ha' got stems to 'em, an' the mussels is shaped like the squar shoulders o' a man?"

He had by instinct named the chief characteristics by which scientists distinguish these forms.

Maclure's eyes rested on the boy with startled discernment. But he said nothing.

"Don't ye want airy on 'em?" went on the boy wistfully.

Maclure took from the lad's hands an exquisite tapering rod known as the Orthoceras.

"I'll be very glad of this one," he said kindly. "See, it is a shell, perfectly straight as they were before the Creator began to curl them up like the snail and the nautilus. But you are no true geologist if you give away your specimens. We're the stingiest folk in the world."

"Whut ye doin' up hyar?" asked the boy with curiosity.

Maclure showed him on the bare hilltop the sharp change from the archaic rock to the newer formations, and told him how he had traced their junction all the way from Canada and the Adirondacks, crossing and recrossing it as many as thirty times.

The boy's eyes grew amused. "Whut ye goin' to do when ye've seen it all?" he asked.

Maclure took from his pack his nearly finished map of the United States and spread it. "See," he said, "these same two beds of rock, how they sweep unbroken through the Carolinas and Georgia to the Gulf."

"Hev ye seen all thet?" asked the boy quietly.

"Yes, and worked at it as I work at this cliff now."

"Great Day!" breathed Seth. "Great Day in the mornin'!"

All that afternoon there was a quietness about the boy which puzzled Maclure. He no longer asked questions, but watched, and when Maclure spoke he listened without comment. Once, indeed, he broke the silence to ask: "Do ye really know whut the bottom of the sea looks like?" And again: "Mister, do ye know anything about the moon?"

Toward nightfall Maclure gathered his pack together. "This is my last day," he said. "To-morrow I shall go across to Warm Valley to examine the hot springs there."

The boy was silent a moment. "Let me tote yer pack home," was all he said.

They were near the cabin when Seth stopped short before him in the path.

"Shall I carry the burden?" asked Maclure.

"No, mister; I got to say somethin' to ye."

Maclure waited, watching him kindly.

"Have you broken something in the pack? Don't be afraid."

"I hain't afeard o' ye," the boy burst out. "Great Day — how should I be afeard o' ye when ye hain't never done me nothin' but help! An' I sassed ye as if ye wuz nothin'," he went one, "an' called ye a fool to yer face. Yer oughter basted me over the head."

"But I have had no desire to 'baste' you over the head."

"Say, mister, I want to go with ye," Seth hurried on, losing breath. "I don't know what to do to make ye take me. I kin tote yer pack and shoot game. Ye don't need never to go hungry in the woods with me along. I would n't trouble ye — not like I bin doin'."

"But, my lad, is n't this a sudden decision? If you want to see the world —"

"I don't want to see any world. I want to *know* what ye know. I want to stop bein' blind — I do."

Maclure put his hand on the boy's shoulder. The appeal touched him as no other could have done.

"It is possible that I might take you, but how about your parents?"

"Bill Swently hain't my parent," said Seth angrily.

"I am glad to know that."

At this sudden recognition of his wrongs, Seth's eyes smarted as if with tears.

"I would take you," said Maclure, "if you could get your mother's consent."

"But I cain't git that," said Seth desperately. "She'd make me stay to help git meat fer her an' the younkers."

"I have no doubt she needs you."

"I don't keer," said Seth roughly.

"But, my lad — !"

"Bill Swently, he used ter hunt game an' he kin hunt ag'in."

"Do you think he would do so?"

"Yes, he'd git hungry. Oh, Mr. Maclure, I've got to go!" he said again.

Maclure was silent, and presently the boy went on: "Whut's the use o' gittin' game an' eatin' vittels when whut ye're wantin' the dern while is to — to *know* somethin'!"

In the gathering darkness the boy's face showed like a struggling prayer.

"I'll ask your mother," said Maclure at last.

"Then it's no use; she won't leave me go," repeated the boy.

He hurried into the cabin and up by the ladder into his loft. His laying bare his heart had keenly hurt him. It had been futile, and now a passionate shyness drove him off alone. He heard Maclure come in and later his mother, who dropped her armful of wood with a crash.

"Whar's that Seth?" she demanded.

The courteous voice of Maclure answered, "I think your son has withdrawn himself that I may speak more freely to you."

"Why, whut's he bin doin' the noo?" Her voice was full of anger. In a panic lest she refuse the coming request,

Seth stopped his ears. As he did so he saw again those great paths of rock sweeping the continent as the Milky Way sweeps the sky. And his soul swam dizzily in the vastness of it.

When he unstopped his ears, it was his mother's voice which came up to him.

"He war thet sort onct, afore Bill Swently doited him."

"Bill Swently will have some way to go yet before he 'doits' your boy," said Maclure.

"Well, if he hain't done it yit, he'll be doin' it sune," said Seth's mother fatally. "He canna thole the lad 'cause he knows I'm proud yit o' Robert Way. An' Seth, he's Robert's son. He 's nane o' Bill Swently's." She began to rattle the iron pot at her work.

"Ye would no be thinkin'," she said, half to herself, "that Seth's feyther wuz from the gentry. He wuz lettered, an' above a', he was a saint. Why, he used to shet his eyes an' see Heaven an' the angels! Many's the time he's tellt me o' 't. Robert had the 'second sight'!"

"Indeed," said Maclure, slightly distressed.

He waited, and presently Seth's mother began again. "An' when I look at the lad an' see whut I've brung him tae, there's somethin' skaiths me inside like a knife. Seems I'd liefer kill the lad than hae him coom to what he is!"

"Madam, you can hardly mean that."

"I do — I do! Oh, Maister Maclure, ye're a Scot — an' I've bin tryin' to ask ye lang syne, lang syne!" She stopped and seemed to be standing perfectly still. Seth had no idea what she was striving at.

"Could ye — could ye take him awa — clean awa — oot o' this here backwoods? Oh, Maister Maclure, I would na be carin' what Bill Swently would do if only

Robert's lad war oot of it. Lord, Lord, I'd be happy! Oh, could na ye tak him awa — wi ye!"

Seth's ears were singing so that he could not hear Maclure's answer. His mother was not only letting him go, she was pleading for it. He lay face downward in the dark loft. Suddenly his mind was strangely empty of all its wishing.

"Have you made all ready, laddie?" asked Maclure when he met Seth next morning.

They were in front of the cabin and Seth was washing his face. He looked up joyously.

"They hain't nothin' to be ready but me," he said.

And Maclure answered, "Well, that is the best readiness."

A great life-full rain was pouring down through the forest, fragrant, creative, deep, presaging all the beauty of the coming summer.

At the breakfast, Seth was waiting with the children for Maclure to finish.

"Set ye doon," said his mother roughly. "Will ye wait till Bill Swently cooms ben an' keeps ye?" For Swently was absent, having lingered overnight at the Settlement.

It was a pathetic meal. The deer meat was green and tough. There were scones, which Seth had not seen before in the cabin; and when Maclure praised them Seth was amazed at the pleasure of his mother's face.

Seth reached his rifle "Becky" from its hook and took the pack from Maclure's hand. In his heart was now something like fear, which increased when his mother calmly walked out with them. Might she not repent and keep him back even yet?

"Walk with your mother," commanded Maclure, stepping ahead. "Perhaps she has something to say to you."

And with sullen, bent head Seth walked at her side, but no word passed between them. At the edge of the hill, she halted.

"I'm comin' only this fur," she said; and Seth, like a freed deer, leaped forward to Maclure's side.

Far down at the turn in the path, Maclure looked back. The woman stood there on the crag, gaunt and tall, shading her eyes.

Maclure waved his hand to her.

"My boy," he said concernedly, "will you leave without even a look to your mother?"

Seth turned and saw for a lifetime's remembrance that figure of renunciation. Then he bent his head lower yet, and hurried faster.

"Well, I've got to go," he said doggedly.

And Maclure, frowning, wondered whether he had made a mistake in taking this wilderness boy.

CHAPTER VII

SETH RESUMES THE TALE

IN WHICH I TAKE UP MY JOURNEY AND LEARN WHAT MANNER OF FRIEND I HAVE FOUND

NEVER shall I forget the first morning of that journey with the purposeful figure of Maclure striding ahead of me in the rain. It was not so much the going or the adventure which excited me. It was the breaking of chains. This man had shown me a goal. He had put life into my life.

Maclure was austere and silent, and even seemed to eye me with suspicion. I was keenly aware of this, but I could not imagine the cause. Besides, the man now loomed large in my boyish mind and I was shy of assailing him with questions.

Once during the morning he picked up a stone and gave it to me.

"What is the weight of that?" he asked.

"'Baout as hefty as three rabbits, an' a rabbit weighs a pound."

"That is n't right," said Maclure. "The stone is six pounds, at least. You must train your judgment."

Later he plucked a vine and put it in my hand. "Tell me all you notice about that plant."

"Why, that hain't nothin' but a common weed."

"My lad, nothing in the whole forest is common, not the smallest plant or stone or dry twig but would strain the wisdom of the wisest man. I hope you will soon get that point of view."

I stopped in the path, not knowing whether to be amused or awestruck.

"A dry twig, say ye, like thet thar?"

"Yes, what process made it dry? What is the difference between life and death in it? What kind of a twig is it, anyway? Ask yourself such questions?"

"Will ye help me answer 'em?" I asked, gazing up into his face.

Something in my look must have touched him, for his face changed and he put his hand on my shoulder. "I will, indeed," he said.

At noon we halted and ate the scones and bacon which my mother had given us. It was the last of her pitiful cooking of which I ever partook. Then we marched on in silence. The forest was so dense that we could see but a few feet on either side of the path. Late in the afternoon I said doubtfully:

"This hyar whut ain't no common weed has got leaves growin' straight across from each other on the stem. But all weeds do that."

"Do they?" asked Maclure, and reaching out, seemingly at random, plucked me another. Its leaves were alternate.

"Why, things jest come to ye like as if ye whistled to 'em," I remarked.

"They will to you some day, my boy," he answered.

We came to a log cabin and stopped for the night. The people — English — welcomed us with pathetic eagerness. They built a great fire in their chimney and we sat before it, Maclure holding their little girl upon his knee. The woman skillfully prepared supper while the man asked questions. Had we come far? How long since we

had been in London? Had there been more Parliamentary reforms lately? Had the Luddites been at it again, breaking machinery in the factories? What of King George and the Radicals? And finally — "What are you doing in these parts, anyway?"

"I am doing what appears to most men crazy foolery. I am studying the rock-structure of the country."

"What for?"

"To learn its nature and origin. Other men will benefit by my labors. But it is useless for me to pretend that I do it for that reason. I do it because to me it is the greatest pleasure in life."

The Englishman looked puzzled, but no one could doubt Maclure's statement, made with his fine candor and enthusiasm.

"How much have you done?"

"All of the United States — that is, from Canada to the Gulf and as far west as the Great Stony Mountains. Before that I went all over Europe. But other men have worked on Europe. Here I am alone, the first in the field, and a magnificent field it is!" Maclure's eyes shone as he spoke.

"Have you done it alone?"

"Yes, I am a great tramper. I never tire."

"And what does the Government pay you?"

Maclure threw back his head with the delightful laugh I so grew to love.

"Not a penny! Do you suppose our Government has come so far as to consider geology? But it will — it will!"

"Yet it takes money."

"Yes," replied Maclure soberly. "I am very lucky

to have made my fortune early in life and now I spend it as I please."

I meanwhile sat warming my hands, listening with all my ears. So this, I thought, this sort was my friend! I had chosen well, indeed. But why in the world had he chosen me?

At bedtime the Englishman gave us each a glass of whiskey, and I sipped mine with great hardihood.

The next day I received my first reading lesson sitting on a log in the midst of the greenwood. I wonder if any child to-day, opening his book in a well-ordered school, can imagine the trembling hunger with which I, a great lad of fourteen, began. My textbook was Neef's "Method of Teaching" — a book which Maclure told me he was trying to introduce wherever he could find opportunity. My ignorance was appalling. My small Scottish learning had totally dispersed. At first I could hardly discipline my mind to return precise answers to my teacher's questions.

Gradually as the lesson proceeded my embarrassment disappeared and the interest of language-building took its place. Only once did my attention break when a doe gazed out silent from the thicket.

Maclure was no hunter. "What is the matter?" he asked.

"Nothin', only I seed a doe."

"Saw, saw," almost impatiently. "There is no such verb as 'seed'."

"Hain't one way o' talkin' as good as another?" I asked, wondering.

"No; language is unclear enough at the best. Clear, unmistakable words are precious. Learn to use words with precision and you will learn to think."

I looked my wonder, but I understood.

As we finished our lesson and I had taken up the pack, Maclure asked, "Seth, how often do you get drunk?"

"Not often," I acknowledged. "Bill Swently kind o' sp'iled thet fer me. How often do you, sir?"

Maclure eyed me steadily for a moment; then, convinced of my respectfulness, he answered, "I was never drunk in my life."

We came at length to Warm Valley and saw the hot spring boiling up, strong with strange smells. Here Maclure quite forgot me. All day he studied the strata of limestone and sandstone. At night he wrote in his notebook, and finally drew a map and cross-section of the mighty fissure through which the waters issued from the depths.

After that we traveled on to Jackson River. I know now that this was a digression for my benefit. It would be hard to find anywhere a hill which so clearly displayed the manner of all hill-making.

It was a bright afternoon when we reached the gorge. The river here makes its final escape through the hills and its voice was loud in the untouched wilderness.

"You remember," said Maclure, "what I told you of the layers of sand and clay laid down by the sea. They lie in level beds."

"Yes," I responded.

Maclure took out a pencil and began to sketch rapidly as he talked. The teacher was ever active in him. If it had not been I who was the fortunate recipient of his instructions, he would have overflowed to some other.

"Well, then; these beds grow thicker and heavier, thus —" He sketched the increasing beds. "And finally,

whether from the cooling and shrinking of the earth, or from some huge inequality of pressure, the strata are thrust up together into heaps and folds which form mountains. Usually in this process the layers are more or less broken and twisted or even slip by each other so that they are not continuous. You can see it takes a practiced eye to trace out and read the confusion. But here, where Jackson River cuts through Rich Patch Mountain, the fold is beautifully clear and unbroken. Come, let us have a look at it."

Never shall I forget how it broke upon me as we turned into the gorge. The cliff fronted us across the torrent with its bold, outstanding strata of limestone stretching sweep above sweep in mighty arcs to the very summit, where the trees stood like tiny toys against the sky. Massive and overwhelming the arches stood out from the body of the mountain. The lowest spanned an arc of several hundred yards. The highest, magnificently overarching all the rest, was half a mile from base to base. Between the bright bands of limestone dull sandstone layers followed the same grand bow. The face of the cleft was bare of leaves in the early spring. Only the redbud bloomed delicately between the eternal rainbows of stone.

It needed no further word. The very gesture of upheaval was in it yet. The cosmic motion seemed just ceased.

"Well, what do you think of it?" asked Maclure.

I looked up into his face utterly unable to speak what was surging in me.

"Hoots, lad, how you do understand!" he exclaimed, and in sudden pleasure took my hand.

Needless to say, after this experience I was never again to look with dull eyes upon the hills.

CHAPTER VIII

IN WHICH I SLEEP UNDER THE SKELETON OF A HORSE

THAT summer we worked westward into Tennessee along the French Broad, and northward to Kentucky. Late autumn found us in Philadelphia, where Maclure fell to work upon the Journal of the Academy of Natural Sciences. So interested was he in it that he even caused it to be printed in an apartment of his own house. For me he secured a teacher from whom I received daily lessons; but my best hours were those which I spent in helping Maclure.

The following spring he was suddenly called to England. He placed me with friends, leaving an all too ample sum for my support.

Every free moment I spent in the Academy. The institution was only a few years old. It occupied but a single, poorly lighted room and boasted only a few cases of common insects, some madrepores, a dried toad fish, a stuffed monkey, and the skeleton of a horse. The Society itself consisted of seven members, who met once a week to converse on scientific subjects.

But to me this humble Academy was a Paradise of Knowledge. I conceived the ambition of enriching its collections. I hunted butterflies, shells, and insects, and classified them with the help of Mr. Ord and Mr. Lesueur, members of the Academy. Later, as I gained confidence, I mounted and classified them unaided.

Then, both to economize Maclure's money, and not to

waste a moment of my time, I left my boarding-place and took up my abode in the Academy itself. I tried to imitate Maclure's abstemious habits — a somewhat drastic practice for a growing boy.

Many days I spent entirely in the woods; others in the Academy. Save for the snatching of a little Latin for classification purposes, I quite neglected my studies. I worked feverishly at the natural sciences and took no time for myself. It is incredible that a full-blooded boy should have chosen such a life for himself. But I had been starved of knowledge and now I devoured, at least certain kinds of knowledge, with hunger insatiable.

In the fall of 1821 Maclure returned. I hastened to the ship to meet him. I was dumb with joy at seeing him again. He came down the gangplank, his loose coat swinging in the wind, his face beaming as he said his good-byes to his fellow-travelers. He looked taller and more robust than any of them.

Then he saw me.

"Why, you brown Indian!" he said, shaking me and looking me up and down. "You've grown a foot."

"I reckon I have," I said happily.

"But you are a touch thin, a touch thin. Has n't Mrs. Woods been feeding you well?"

"I have n't stayed with Mrs. Woods," I stammered.

I took his portmanteau and we started up the street.

"Where, then?"

"Well — just at the Academy. They fussed so long over breakfast, it wasted my time."

"Wasted your time, did it? But, Lord, child, there's no bed in the Academy!"

"No, I just slept under the skeleton of the horse."

"The what!"

"The skeleton of the horse, sir. Really, it was all right there — a sort of four-poster."

Maclure's laugh rang heartily. "And was the shell-case your breakfast-table?"

"No; I just took a little bread and milk. You see I could get up at sunrise if I liked and hurry — and get to work."

"You insatiable monster! That is n't study; that's greediness. You can't work like that. You'll come to my place at once, young man, — and sleep o' nights too. What have you done in Latin and French?"

"Not very much," ruefully. "I'm afraid Mr. Troost will give you a bad report of me."

"But why?"

"Well, you see, sir, the *Papilio* case was almost empty — and I started to fill it up — and it took all my time in the woods, and evenings classifying. I ought not to have done it, sir. I —" All my joy left me at thought of displeasing him.

But he had not been listening to me.

"Seth, how would you like to go with me next week to the West Indies? I am going to study the geology of the whole chain of the Antilles."

"Oh, Mr. Maclure!"

"Well, don't drop my portmanteau in the middle of the street! I understand you'll go?"

This new journey filled my waking and sleeping hours. The geology of volcanic islands I had never hoped to study save from books and charts. And now I was to make original research with all the sun and the wind and beauty of it.

How busy we were over our outfit and supplies! Maclure was as full of boyish eagerness as I. I got down my rifle and cleaned and oiled it, with strange, painful memories — memories which had long been crying for room in my mind. The old operations, habitual in the cabin days, made memory so vivid that I hastily put the gun away and went over to the Academy. Still, as I worked there, the picture of my mother, gaunt upon her cliff as I had seen her that last morning, floated between me and my work. I felt as though I had been always thus remembering her, though unaware of it.

That night like a bolt from the dark fell the experience I would so gladly have been spared. I suddenly awoke out of a deep sleep. I thought some one had called; and a great dread of the call came over me. I listened. The silence of the room grew unreal like a silence of great space. Then there broke upon me that call—from within, I know, yet more real than sound, more aweful than any sound — "Seth," it began in my mother's fretful voice, "Seth, ye loon." And suddenly the heartbreaking entreaty — "Seth, come to me — I need ye! Come to me, come to me — Seth!"

I jumped from the bed free — free to move again. But I could no more have resisted the power of that low cry than I could have silenced the thunder.

My mother's inner life flashed open to me — her loneliness, her fears, her slain dignity, her brooding love for the "son o' Way," a love which had burned through helpless days, until, without one thought for herself, she could push me out of the ruin.

I found myself pacing the room, wringing my hands, an action new to me. "This is absurd," I said aloud.

I dressed, stole out into the starlit street, and walked as hard as I could. I tried to reason with myself. "You could n't hear your mother. You could n't find her if you tried. Bill Swently's moved a dozen times." And then — "Oh, yes, back to the old cabin life because of a bit of nightmare! Mr. Maclure will admire your good sense."

It is vain to try to describe this experience. It cannot seem real to another person. But I did experience it, and it is one of the great facts of my life.

I finally got myself calm. I began to see the unreasonableness of my dream. By sunrise I found myself in the wood where I had hunted butterflies. I came across a fine specimen of the *Anosia plexippus* caterpillar, caught it and mentally made its description as I returned home.

But instead of going to the Academy as I had purposed, I mounted Maclure's steps and went straight to his room. I found him occupied with Michaux's "Silva," a work which he was republishing in America at his own expense. He had the copper plates and proofs spread all about his chamber on every available space and he was putting them in order with his own hands for the printer.

He looked up and instantly crossed over to me.

"What is the matter? You are ill."

At that moment I suddenly knew that I must obey my mother's call. I knew, too, that its unreasonableness would offend Maclure more than any rank ingratitude. I never could explain it to him. Yet I must somehow break through.

"I've got to go away," I blurted out. "My mother needs me. I've got to go to her."

He took me by the shoulders gently and set me down.

"When did you get news? What has happened?" he asked. "Don't worry about funds; I'll see you through, of course."

I sat looking up at him in such dumb suffering that he turned away so that I might calm myself. His tenderness overwhelmed me, and I was all at once aware that he needed me even as I needed him.

"Tell me," he urged.

"I can't tell ye," I stammered. (In my excitement I had dropped into my backwoods talk.) "I can't tell ye anything about it. I've just got to go to her."

He waited a moment, trying to guess the cause of my reticence.

"You must not hesitate to tell me," he said. "You know I am not easily prejudiced by what is called disgrace. What has happened to your mother?" Then he added deliberately, "As your adopted father, I have the right to know anything that has hurt you so deeply."

He had never before called himself that name. I shall never forget the glow of home it sent over me, nor its sudden blighting as I answered doggedly:

"She's called me, that's what she's done. Just called me out o' the air in the night. It's silly, crazy silly, but I've got to go!"

It took yet more explanations before Maclure fully understood the futility of my conduct. Even then he was not angry.

"I recollect now your mother's saying that your father was subject to these visions — 'seeing angels' she called it. This is not uncommon among the Scotch. Do not be disturbed, my boy. This is an inherited failing. It signifies nothing. Ignore it and it will pass."

He said much more than this. I tried to listen. Heaven knows I wanted to believe him. But so potent was the mysterious summons that I knew if I failed to go, the sense of perfidy would never leave me.

I turned again to Maclure, but my mother's need completely overwhelmed me.

"I've got to go," I repeated with bowed head.

Then Maclure's anger broke. I did not recognize it as such, for I was familiar only with the outbreaks of Swently and his like. Maclure's showed only in a sudden darkening of the eye, a setting of the lips. But none-the-less it was Maclure's master.

"I had thought," he said, in a low voice, "that I had discovered in you a truly rational mind, one which could seize knowledge unhampered by preconceived notions, notions which have degraded the world from the beginning. I find that you are uncommonly under the sway of superstition. You must see yourself that I cannot do more either with you or for you. You may go. I do not care to see you again."

CHAPTER IX

IN WHICH I ANSWER MY MOTHER'S CALL

NEVER did a more desolate boy leave his father's roof than was I, as with my few belongings I closed the door of Maclure's house. The click of that latch seemed to shut me out of all that was desirable and set me in outer darkness. I loathed the life to which I was returning. I was heartbroken at displeasing Maclure, at seeming to throw back in his face all his rich gifts, and his love.

And I was filled with shame at giving heed to a dream. I was no mystic. I loved clear thinking upon facts. I loved the pursuit of natural science. In those days science was young; and it presented itself to me, as to all its students, with the passion and warmth of new discovery. That I should now turn back to the old superstitions was the extreme of humiliation and of loss.

After many days of weary tramping I came to the traders' store at Windy Gap. It was as I had foreseen. Swently had moved on, this time southward to Georgia. As I proceeded, I did not lack traces. At one settlement my mother had buried a baby, at another Swently had got roaring drunk and shot up the town.

In Georgia Indians were still plentiful. I heard tales of Indian raids which filled me with new alarm for my mother. At last one morning at a Cherokee village, a half-breed told me: "Bill Sewentilly, he live yon far in wood. Come by here with horse sometime. But now him cold weather — Sewentilly, he no come by." He imitated Bill Swently's swagger quite beyond mistake.

These Indians were peaceful-looking folks in their rude log houses and winter dug-outs. I even saw traces of their corn-plantings. My fears diminished.

Now that I was near my goal my spirits rose. The day was bright and warm, though in December. Surely the danger, if danger there had been, would be gone by now. My coming was foolish. I pictured my mother's joy when she should see me at the door. I was shy even of this imagining, for I had never kissed my mother in the old cabin days. I suddenly realized how small and frail she was. No doubt I should have to bend down to her, for I was the taller now.

At the edge of a stream I was passing lay a stout pail. It looked familiar and I picked it up. There upon the rim was the awkward S.W. which I had carved one afternoon long ago. I turned, ran breathless up the hill. Yes, there was the cabin — the door open. I failed to notice its desertedness and hurried in. It was vacant — every corner. Bill Swently had moved again! In my first baffling moment, I saw no farther. Then a strangeness about the room arrested me. Why had they left that good table overturned in the corner, and the chaff-bed so needed on the journey. It was tossed and broken open, the chaff pouring out upon the floor. And here in the corner was the Scotch chest, my mother's only wealth. I threw it open. It was filled with gear.

Then suddenly the place became unreal with a horror not to be guessed nor thought upon. I went out-doors, looking, yet trying not to look. Outside, the ground was trampled and torn, and plain in sight were three graves. I stole toward them. Each had its fragment of limestone; but there were no names. Two of the graves were very

small. What could they mean? Dumbly I forced myself back to the cabin for further clues. Dark stains were on floor, torn fragments of a dress, some Indian arrows. I began to tremble so that I had to cling to the sapling bedpost. I bowed my head. Remorse in wave after wave went over me. I had stayed away these months with never a thought of her. I had parted from her without a word. No wonder that cry of hers had found me over all these leagues and miles. The Indians had killed her; and it was to me, to me, she had called. And I could never reach to her, or help or comfort her.

I made me no excuses, I made no plea that I had gone from her a mere dumb animal or that only Maclure's humanizing had made me capable of this affection.

At last I became aware of brown leaves sliding in the wind across the cabin floor. Outside the air had darkened and there was a flurry of snow. I dragged myself out of the cabin and through the wood, not knowing whither I went.

At nightfall I came to a settlement and stopped at the first log hut.

"I will work for you to-morrow," I told them, "if you will give me lodging."

"Reckon we can give you a sup anyways," said the man kindly. "You-all must n't take us for savages just 'cause we live kind o' wild."

I hurriedly began to question. Was that Bill Swently's cabin back in the pine wood? Had the Indians murdered them all, or what had happened?

"Well, now, that's as ye take it," said the man. "Set down, won't ye?"

His wife, with the sweet swiftness of womankind, had already set my plate and bowl of milk.

"What do you mean?" I cried.

"Wall, mebbe it's Injins — and mebbe 't aint," he said mysteriously. "Mrs. Swently, now, an' her two younkers, we find 'em — killed." Here followed graphic details. "An' they's some arrys an' tommyhawks on the floor. Them thar's easy to git. But Bill Swently, he hain't thar nor here — hain't never come back, an' what 's more — he'd better not. Why, young fella, what ails ye? Ye hain't kin to 'em!"

"Mrs. Swently was my mother."

I was sitting at the table, and as I spoke, I fell forward against it. "I don't know what makes me tremble," I faltered.

I remember nothing more.

CHAPTER X

THE COLONEL LONG EXPEDITION

I WAS ill for many weeks and woke again from my fever to find good Mrs. McCurdy beside me, ministering to me as though I had been her own.

I faced life blankly. I felt bitter over my mystic misadventure, which had benefited no one and had lost me my dearest friend.

After my recovery my newfound friends migrated on to Kentucky, and I went with them. We stopped at Wolf Creek, below Louisville, where I helped them build their cabin and clear their dooryard. I could never repay them. They had saved more than my life by their overflowing kindness. But I wanted to move on, I knew not whither. I wanted to be free in the forest for observation and study. By this time I had slipped back into uncouth forest ways and speech. The old habits were very strong. The great forest was closing me in again.

One day I tramped over to Brandenburg to sell our bundle of furs. As I came to the river-landing, I noted a steamboat, a craft not so common but that I stopped to look at her.

"Takin' passengers fur down-river?" I asked a man on the shore.

"No, siree. This yere's a Gov'ment craft. Lord only knows where she's a-goin'."

"What kind o' things they doin'?" I inquired with interest.

"Wall, they calls it the Long Expedition. Though why a boat should be called a Expedition, I don't see. They're goin' into the undeskivered rivers westward."

My heart leaped up. "Great sakes, I wisht I could be lookin' up rivers," I said.

"Yes, but it hain't rivers they're goin' fur. They're goin' to look at rocks. Hit's dad-burned nonsense!"

Surely when we long for knowledge some invisible angel throws it in our path!

I strode over the gangplank to the boat. A handsome, kindly man stood on the deck. I afterward learned that this was Thomas Say, the great naturalist.

"Oh, sir," I said breathlessly, "that man says you're goin' West, and — can't ye take me?"

"That's what some boy says at every landing," he smiled.

"Yes, but I'm a good woodsman and I'm — I'm quick at the trigger." I was not accustomed to brag. "There's not a better shot round Wolf Creek than me."

I was conscious that my excitement broke my talk more than usual into backwoods jargon and I blushed painfully.

"I'd keep ye in game an' furs," I added.

"I suppose there are many who would do that; but we have supplies only for our party. I am afraid Colonel Long cannot add to it." Kind as he was, I knew he was definitely refusing me. A quivering rose in me as if I should cry like a child.

"It — it is n't the West I want," I faltered. "It's the rocks. I studies 'em — and studies 'em. But I can't learn 'em alone." I took out a handful of fossil shells from my pocket, for I was always gathering them. "See these

hyar," I cried desperately. "I've described some of 'em. But this hyar one I can't describe. I don't know what hit's kin to."

His face changed. "My boy, what makes you interested in these?"

I was distressingly shy over my quarrel with Maclure. Since I had left him I had never spoken his name to any one.

"A friend — he told me — an' taught me — but he's gone now."

"But what makes you keep at it?"

"Would n't you keep at 'em, sir, ef you onct learned 'em? It's them that makes the world."

"Make the world, do they? What did you guess this shell to be?"

"Hit's somethin' like a *Spirifer perextensus*. But you can see it hain't. It's different shaped."

He laughed. I suppose my rough speech, mingled with Latin, sounded queer.

"You are a very remarkable lad. Long shall take you if I can make him."

My eyes blurred suddenly. I could not answer him.

He turned and went into the cabin. I could hear him talking and several slow answers. At last he came back.

"You shall go," he said.

"Thank ye, mister," I said quietly; but I felt as if I had been released from some great danger. I held out my beloved fossils. "Won't ye take these?" I asked. "I — I know they're rare. That thar folded *Calymene* is about perfect."

He took my hand and closed my fingers over the fossils. There was a world of kindness in the gesture.

"No, no, boy," he said, "your *Spirifer* is a new discovery. You must keep it for yourself."

"How long do you stay here, sir?" I asked.

"Until this afternoon."

"Then I can go back an' — an' tell the folks. They're not my folks; I hain't got any kin — but I'd like to tell 'em — an' say good-bye."

"You can't get back to Brandenburg in time."

"No, sir; I got a canoe o' my own. I live below at Wolf Creek. I'll board ye there."

I hurried home along the forest road. So happy was I that not until I neared the cabin did I remember the sorrowful explanations I had at hand. Mrs. McCurdy was giving her cornbread a vigorous beating before setting it in the ashes.

"Mrs. McCurdy," I said, "here's the pelt money." I laid it on the table.

"Yes, Seth, but ye must n't give it all. Most o' them skins was your'n."

"I want you to have it," I said. I stood beside the table trying to bring myself to speech.

"What's the news to Brandenburg?" she asked, turning out her batter with a fine sweep.

"It's queer news. I — I reckon you'll think it's queer." She looked anxiously up at me.

"There's a new steamboat there, Mrs. McCurdy, an' they've promised to take me. It's an expedition. I — I can't help it. I must go with 'em."

"Go?" she repeated.

"Yes; they're travelin' up to the sources of the new Missouri River — fur out in the wilderness — an' they're goin' to study rocks all the way."

"Ye wuz allus crazy about rocks, wa'n't ye?" she said. She carefully moulded her cake, covered it with a pan, and buried it in the hot ashes. "I don't want ye to go, Seth," she said at last. "Ye seem like a son to Jim an' me."

I kept my hands behind me to still their trembling.

"Of course, ye know what a help ye are," she went on. "But it hain't that. I want ye should know it hain't that."

"I hain't done nothin' for you," I blundered miserably. "I never, never could make it up to you, anyway."

McCurdy himself came into the cabin. He always seemed to fill it entirely. Yet he was a spare man.

"Highty-tighty, what's the matter? You an' mother hevin' your first quarrel?" he asked.

"No," she answered. "It's Seth sayin' he's got to leave us. An' it's kind o' knocked me off my pegs."

"Wall, I should think so!" said McCurdy.

I told him the facts, and to my relief, he understood.

"Got to go? 'Course you got to go! A boy that 'ud let that get apast him would n't be wuth shucks. Of course, studyin' rocks is damn foolishness. But ye'll see the hull back country, the hull of it! Now, Seth, you just hurry on down to your canoe an' watch for 'em. They might start 'fore time. An' Johnny'll bring your supper."

All through the gentle twilight I sat on the bank watching the quiet river. The sheen died upon the water, the dank, sweet smell of river mists came about me and the fireflies began to dance above the water like other stars.

Most craft in those days — keelboats and arks — tied up for the night. The noble stream went by, deserted as

in its virgin days. I grew anxious, but I was too keen for weariness. At last about three of the morning a boat came dimly into sight far up-river. I dipped paddle and hurried out to midstream. The craft came nearer and I filled the quiet river with my halloos. I saw now that it was no steamer, but a keelboat with its little house atop and long sapling sweep at the stern.

"Hey, there," I shouted. "Have ye seen the steamboat — the steamboat from Brandenburg?" They seemed to be trying to avoid me.

"No," growled the answer with an oath, "hain't seen er."

Suddenly a new voice called more civilly, "I seen 'er. I seen yer steamboat."

I dipped paddle with a will and soon came alongside. A hand reached over to me.

"Where was she?" I asked.

"Just come aboard, young feller." Two men seized me and lifted me into the keel. At the same instant some one gave my canoe a shove off into the starlight.

"What are you doin'," I cried angrily, "losin' me my boat?"

"Nothin', sonny, but it's healthier fur you to stay with us, d' ye hear?"

I saw that I was at a pass. I turned at once to fling myself into the water. But the two men caught me.

"Ye begin that an' we'll tie ye, ye tarnal fool!"

"Tie him anyways or ye'll be the fool," said another.

They tied me hand and foot. I tried to keep my wits about me. I let them finish their job, then I said: "Will you kindly tell me why you want to hold me. I have n't a cent in the world — and I promise you I won't do a lick o' work — not if ye kill me."

"Ye won't, hey!" — a loud guffaw. "Well, mebbe we won't work ye. Ye can sit yere on deck an' play the gee-tar. Hev a smoke?"

I took their tobacco and thanked them, resolved to keep silence and to watch what I might do. I did not allow myself for a moment to think that I would miss my precious steamboat. I began to see for myself what the trouble was. The keelboat was full of cattle — fine teams of oxen, worth big money in the forest. The men also were well stacked up with whiskey. As I watched the morning break over the clear, still river, I thought it out. They had stolen the oxen somewhere up-river and were making off. No doubt they feared I would tell their whereabouts.

"Look here," I began, "I'm goin' off — clean away! I don't keer what you-alls have got or what ye ain't got."

As I spoke a dim craft rounded the farthest bend! Above her a small black cloud trailed in air. I heard the distant throb as of breathing. It was my steamboat! I gave a cry.

"Hey," asked the man by me. "What struck ye?"

"It's my boat. The steamboat I was lookin' fer. Fer God's sake, let me off to her."

"Wall, now, I reckon not," he drawled.

I controlled myself to speak with him. "I can't give ye nothin'. I have n't got a thing in the world. But I won't tell on ye. I won't harm ye. Jest put me over the side an' let me swim!"

"Say, you feisty feller," said the man more kindly, "what you fussin' about? We 'll let ye off t'morrow."

"To-morrow's too late. It's now, now, now! Oh,

sir," I cried, "ye don't know what ye're doin' to keep me from this thing."

"Yes, we do," he laughed. "Reckon we know what you'd do t'us ef ye got away. Mighty quare you a-comin' out on the river at three in the mornin'."

"Folks come out any time to catch a boat."

"Yes, but they wa'n't no boat, sonny!"

"Howsomever they is now," broke in another. "His damn steamboat's gittin' too close."

"Let me off," I cried, struggling in the ropes until it seemed I would break my arms.

They paid no heed to me. All hands plied the oars, sweeping the keelboat toward the Indiana side. A handy creek (handy for them, supreme tragedy for me) was near. They gained it and were soon secure among the willows. With breaking heart I saw the Long Expedition steamboat swing slowly into sight and go sighing down the morning-misted river into her far adventure of the unknown West.

That day I was too occupied with my present miseries to dwell upon my greater sorrow.

One of the keelboat men shaved that morning. I took this as a symbol of decency and resolved to keep at him, neglecting all the others. It was he who brought me my breakfast about ten o'clock. I ate it without a word.

"Well, anyways, ye got grit," he said. "Ye hain't whined once."

"No," I said, "and now I won't promise not to tell. My promise held good only this mornin'."

"Tarnation to ye, I believe ye," he said.

All day we lay to, and at nightfall made ready to slip

forth again. The men were all half drunk, but every one of them was busy. The cattle stamped noisily.

In the twilight unexpectedly my shaven friend stood over me. He had a sheath-knife in his hand.

"Keep still, damn ye!" he said cautiously. "Now, thar — skoot!" As he spoke he deftly cut one bond after the other. The pain of the sudden release made me gasp. I stretched my arms to get their use again and climbed stiffly over the gunwale. For an instant I hung on the edge outside, then I dropped silently into the creek.

I found myself neck deep in muddy water, but managed to gain the bank. Then I ran with all my might. Once in the deep wood I knew that I was safe. For the moment I was almost sorry, as now my great calamity came over me. Great rugged fellow though I was, I threw myself down upon the forest mould and wept bitterly until I was exhausted.

CHAPTER XI

IN WHICH I FIND A COMPANION AND HEAR NEWS

After this I became a real wanderer. I roamed the great wilderness studying rocks, trees, shells, insects — everything that I could lay my hands on. I was often bitterly lonely. When strata or fossils baffled me, as they so often did, how I longed to turn with my problem to Maclure! When I made some happy discovery, it was to Maclure I wanted to give it, with Maclure I wanted to share the wonder and delight.

Once, indeed, this wish became so strong that I actually set out toward Philadelphia. But after a week of foot journeying some pride, some growing manliness in me, made me stop. Maclure had sent me away with no uncertain words. He was done with me and I must needs be done with him.

But my ignorance was appalling. And doubtless much of my work was upon problems which had already been solved. Of chemistry, geography, of a thousand necessary things, I knew nothing. In the wilderness there were no scientific books nor any teachers of science. My acquaintances, for the most part, were settler folk who set me down for a harmless lunatic.

But one of my chance encounters was with a person of a very different sort. One day in the eastern Kentucky hills, in front of a log cabin, I came upon a most unusual-looking man. A handsome face with aquiline nose and eyes extraordinarily deep-set and brilliant. "Yes;

every one says I have remarkable eyes," he told me afterward. But his vanity was as charming as everything else about him.

He was at a singular employment. He was sketching in water-colors a bald-headed eagle. The eagle himself stood complacently near on a bough which the artist had evidently placed upon the ground for him. I stepped quickly to the man.

"What in the world — what in the world, sir!"

He looked up with his wonderful lighted eyes. "Is n't he magnificent! That eagle — I have just named him for our good General Washington."

The man's speech was brushed with a clipping French accent.

"But —" I began. Then I saw that the eagle, with marvelous art, was stuffed.

"Ah — you thought him alive!" he cried delightedly. "Excellent!"

"He's even more alive in your picture," I said.

"You think so; you think so!" he exclaimed, as pleased as though my praises were the most valued in the world.

He lifted from the ground a portfolio containing perhaps a dozen paintings, — a huge white water bird, a tiny wren, a jay, — all portrayed in their natural surroundings.

"Behold my mocking-bird!" he said. "I have found him the other day. But the first mocking-bird I ever painted was in Natchez. I tell you there's no more wonderful bird in all the world. Why, that fellow sang there from the rising of the moon until the midnight. And he sang every morning, too, from eight until eleven. I counted fifteen songs, each different, and he also imitated

the watchman's 'All's well,' from the fort, so that he fooled me — he fooled me complete. At the height of his song, sir, he leap right into the air — as of very rapture at his own performance. Wonderful! Sublime! I shall make a picture of him leaping like that!"

We supped together in the cabin and at night slept in the bed which our kind host had vacated for our use. The host and his wife slept upon the floor, and after dark two young girls crept in and made their bed in the farthest corner. We heard them whispering after they thought us asleep.

"Ain't he right smart at that paintin'!" said one.

"Yes, but why d's he waste time on an ole eagle. Wisht he'd paint me."

"Me, too. I'd send it to Jim."

My companion nudged me. Next morning I was not surprised to hear him say, with a ceremonious bow, "Now, mesdames, I am on the point to depart. You have been most kind and hospitable to me. Would it be some little appreciation if I should paint your likeness?"

The girls giggled profusely, disappeared, and at once came back in their Sabbath best. I thought they looked pretty, though the dresses were only blue homespun and their white kerchiefs were belted with strips of home-tanned leather.

The artist swiftly sketched the pair. The family gathered round him, and, as the likeness grew, laughed as though it were the most comical thing in life. When he had finished, I ventured to ask if I could go along with him.

"Come, by every means!" he said enthusiastically. "Do you love birds? What is your name?"

"Seth Way, sir, and I would like to know yours."

"Audubon — Jean Jacques Audubon. I keep a store in Louisville."

For the march my companion wore a leather suit, carried a buffalo horn filled with powder, and a heavy rifle. His hair was in ringlets to his shoulders. His old Daniel Boone garb was by this time somewhat unusual. His whole expression was of high animation, joyous and alert. His frame was of great physical power. I afterward learned that he could swim a river with a man upon his back, and could dance with cultivation and high skill (he was in fact a teacher of dancing). He was a fine shot, and a most charming player on the flageolet. He showed such an affectionate and innocent disposition that notwithstanding all his attainments he often seemed like a prattling child.

Nothing in the woods escaped him; whether a gray spider spinning its web, or the moss upon a tree-trunk rubbed by the antlers of a deer. But his especial delight was birds.

"Listen," he cried, "that whirr of wings!" And as he darted forward one might have thought he had never seen birds before. The grove ahead of us was white with doves.

"Look, look!" he marveled; "was ever anything more lovely than that multitude of wings fluttering to alight! And their heads, how gentle, how full of meaning!"

We resumed our journey.

"What should I do without my birds!" he exclaimed. "Men say that I have a misfortunate life. I had a fortune once — from my dear father. But it goes — it goes — I lose it. They steal it. And then — then I turn to my

birds. And you have no idea how kind is my darling Lucy in all my trouble!"

I inferred that "Lucy" was his wife.

"To know the birds, *all* the birds of this vast northern continent, — that is my ambition! My boy, you also have ambition, I can see. Now, what is it?"

"I!" I said, confused at the unexpected question. "Oh, sir, I want to know the rocks. My God, how I want to know 'em!"

"The rocks," he repeated, wondering.

"Yes, yes," I broke out, for my grief was still fresh; "I had a wonderful chance to study the rocks of the Far West and lost it. That was worse than losing your fortune."

"What was your chance?"

I told him of the Colonel Long boat, of Long's willingness to take me, of my waiting in the canoe, and being caught by the cattle-stealing "keel."

"Where was that?" Audubon demanded.

I told him.

"Where? What kind of men —?"

I told him the details.

"*Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!*" he cried. "It was *my* cattle. That's the last thing I lost — the last of my fortune."

"How do you know? Are you sure?"

"Yes — I have hire those men to cut a stand of timber above Louisville — they cut a lot. Then one night they make off with the timber and my three teams. I have pursue them to Brandenburg. But they give me the slip. Now I am strip. And you also are strip. Think of it, Seth! — you of your expedition, I of my timber and oxen. Embrace me! We still have our birds and our rocks!"

It was plain to me that Audubon possessed the secret of happiness.

That evening when we had eaten our roast game and were resting in the woods by our fire, he took out his flageolet and began to play. I sat in happy marvel, listening to old French songs, bugle-calls, swift dances. Our fire fell to embers, but he still poured out his music into the whispering spaces of the forest dark. And I wondered what the drowsing birds must think of this rival and lover of theirs.

My geology caught his interest at once.

"Ah," he said one day as we walked along the base of a curious limestone cliff, "it is the new science, this geology. I have heard of it. Behold a new world, this of yours, and I have gone up and down in the forest and never perceived! Seth, did you ever hear of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia?"

"Yes," I said, flushing with enthusiasm. "I reckon that's the most wonderful thing in this country, and the most wonderful men."

Audubon stamped his foot in sudden temper. "Gerrrr! Do not say Philadelphia Academy to me! A pack of stiff-necked fools! Scientific grandees!"

"Oh, sir, they're not that, not any of 'em," I cried, shocked beyond measure.

"They are. They blackballed my name when I came up for membership. *Mon Dieu!* I may not be the greatest scholar in the world; but I know more about North American birds than every mother's son of them!"

"Did Mr. Maclure do that?" I asked. "It must have been some mistake. He would n't do that. He is so kind, so just to every one."

"Maclure? No, Maclure is in Spain. My friend wrote me that if Maclure had been there, all would have been otherwise."

"Maclure in Spain? Now? Is he there now?"

"Yes. He bought a tract of land near a place called Alicante and he is living there, trying out some social experiment for the poor. I'm sorry America has lost him!"

"Oh!" I said blankly. "Oh! Then he is gone!" My head bowed forward. I could not look at any one just then.

"My dear fellow, what is the matter? What have I said?" cried Audubon, laying his hand upon my shoulder. "You knew Mr. Maclure?"

"Yes," I said dully.

"And you loved him. I see that you loved him. *Ma foi!* I am sorry that I told you."

"It's better to know," I said, lifting my head quickly.

Somehow the picture of that Academy meeting, the like of which I so well remembered, brought back with vividness Lesueur, Ord, and the others, and then Maclure, as he had bade me good-bye — fully and finally, good-bye.

"Seth, come with me to Louisville," said Audubon kindly. "I am starting for there to-morrow. Come with me."

"I'd like to," I said wistfully.

"Tell me again," I added, "what Mr. Maclure is doing in Spain."

"Trying a social experiment, lad, helping poor people to live better. And, *mon Dieu!* that same thing is being tried over here too. 'Social Communities' they call

them. A rich man from Scotland is starting one in Indiana."

"What is it like?" I asked, with forced interest.

"I can't tell. The settlers who are going there from my section are a poor lot — lazy people who think they will not have to work and queer curmudgeons that don't get along otherwhere."

"Great sakes!" I exclaimed. "What a place it will be!" And with that we stopped and made camp for the night.

CHAPTER XII

"THE FAIRY'S FRAME WAS SLIGHT"

At Harrodsburg we came upon a man starting for Louisville who was willing to take passengers in his wagon. Audubon wanted to ride. He had been drawing portraits all along the way, sometimes at two dollars apiece, and hence was rich beyond the dreams of avarice. I was penniless and perfectly able to walk; but he was so insistent to pay for me that I could not refuse.

Later, three men climbed in with us. All had been drinking; one was thoroughly drunk and at the stage when he must needs entertain the crowd. He sang one vile song after another. I was not listening to him. I was adrift, never more adrift than at this moment. To be sure, I had the one great advantage which is not always vouchsafed to the young: I knew clearly what I desired. But I knew not where to turn to get it. Besides, though I had never known a home, I think I was vaguely homesick.

The drunken song penetrated my mood —

> "The Devil at length scrambled out of his hole,
> Diskivered by Symmes at the freezin' North Pole;
> He mounted an iceberg, spread wings for a sail,
> An' started for Yarth with his long barbèd tail.
>
> "He heered that a number of people was goin'
> To live on the Wabash with great Mr. Owen:
> He said to hisself, I must now take keer
> Circum*stances* require that the Devil be theer!"

"Aw, shet up," growled his companion.

> "Circum*stances* require that the Devil —"

"Shet up, I tell ye!"

The man shook him, and the drunkard gradually settled down with quarrelsome remonstrances.

"He's riled up, you see," explained the friend, "'cause a passel of his folks is goin' to the place to live."

"What place?" asked the third.

"Well, hit's the derndest place and the derndest scheme," said the man, willing to spin his yarn. "That quare fish, Owen, he comes over hyar from Scotland an' he up an' buys a settlemint — a hull *town*, mind ye, surroundin' country an' all — pays perfekly good cash fur it — 'nuff to buy a hull county o' Gov'ment land. An' all he wants to do with it is to try this hyar new way o' livin'. Goin' to bring over folks to live in his town — only they must live accordin' to *his* notions. The man spends his hull time just bossin' humans an' blasphemin' Holy Writ."

"Glory Gosh!" said the other appreciatively. "He must be a kedge 'un. Whar does he hail from?"

"Oh, some damn place over thar in Scotland that he's fixed up jist to suit hisself. Nobody thar kin say their soul's their own, 'ceptin' Owen hisself. Only he'd say ye hain't got no soul *to* own!" He laughed.

"Owen! Scotland!" I woke with a start. "You cannot mean Robert Owen, of New Lanark!"

"Yas, that's it. Lanark — got mills thar."

"And Owen is here — in this country?"

"O' course. Hain't you heered o' the notorious In-fidel and World-fixer?"

The memory of that sunny schoolroom of the mill-owner and his flock of gladdened little ones floated across my mind, clear — intensely clear, as only childhood memories come.

"Indeed, I have heard o' him," I said hotly. "Owen is no infidel an' no fool."

"Ain't? Whadye know about it?"

"I've met him. He was the grandest —" I paused, thinking of Maclure. "Yes, the grandest man I ever saw!"

"Reckon you're one o' them Owenites," said the man, with a significant laugh.

"I reckon I am," I responded warmly, "if Mr. Owen needs a good word. Where is Mr. Owen?"

"Dunno; I hain't no Owenite."

"Where is his town?"

"That is the Community," interrupted Audubon, "that I was telling you of several nights ago —"

"But you did not speak well of it."

"Really, I know nothing about it. I only know some queer people who went there."

"But Owen is a wonderful man. If he is starting a town, it will be the greatest thing in the West. If he's starting a town," I added impulsively, "that's the place I want to live."

"Better be careful, Seth," said Audubon. "You are young and it is important to you where you live. You have not yet heard anything good about it."

"Except Owen's name. That's everything!"

I told him of my early visit to the Lanark School, of Wully McNiff and his cat-organ. Audubon laughed heartily.

"I must find out where Owen is," I ended. "I've got to learn from him what he is doing."

In Louisville I would not even go home with Audubon. For at the inn called "Washington Hall" I found

a week-old newspaper which stated that Mr. Owen was in Louisville itself — visiting the house and school of a Mr. Joseph Neef.

I inquired the way to the school — it was somewhat out of town — and went there at once. The school was a large, bare building. I entered the high-posted gate.

The door was opened masterfully, and a lady of middle age, with tall ruffled cap and creased kerchief on ample bosom, stood before me.

"*Qu'est ce que c'est?*" she said, looking me up and down.

I was suddenly aware that I made a sorry figure in my forest clothes.

"I want to see Mr. Owen."

"And for what?"

"About his town."

"Ah, hees town — hees town! An' he will feel oop hees town with vagabones, an' a fine pless will it become for chentilmen an' ladies who want to make it worth while. What do you comprehend of ze Preenceeples? What do you comprehend of ze New Mooral Woorld?" She made a grand gesture which reduced me to dust.

"Fortunatelee," she ended, "fortunatelee, Meester Owen is nott here. He go *encore* to New York." She shut the door in my face.

I stood on the threshold, amazed. The insult stung me deeply. And was this a specimen of Owen's people? I certainly did not wish to live among such. Arrogance was not common in our wilderness, and we wilderness folk sized it up for about what it was worth. My ardor for Owen's Community was a good deal dampened. I turned and walked slowly away.

Suddenly I was aware of a high, childish voice calling:

"Wanderman, Wanderman, wait — please — I can't — come any faster!"

I looked back and beheld the tiny, flying figure of a child in a black silk dress with gay ribbons at her bare shoulders, and white lace pantalettes fluttering as she ran.

"I — I had to climb down from the gate," she panted as she reached me; "an' my bread-an'-jam was so unconvenient."

The big words from so small a child amazed me. She held a plateau of bread with its goodly spread of jam. A single arc in it showed where her teeth had begun — and a jammy streak across either cheek completed proof.

"Did you want me?" I questioned awkwardly.

"Yes; I saw how she hurted you an' filled your heart with desolations." Her voice was very indignant. "I was high on top of the gatepost when you comed in. But I was unseeable to you."

I recollected now the tiny perched figure.

"An' I heard every word just as the angels-in-heaven do. An' now I have come down to fix it."

I was dumfounded. This baby spoke like a woman grown, and was so precise about it. I found no way to refuse her angelic interference. I was completely unacquainted with this type of little one, this cared-for, this highly trained — I would say overtrained — child were she not so completely lovable. She may have been six years old, but she looked much younger. One could hardly associate years with this wise and kindly sprite.

" Mr. Owen would be horreefied if he knew the unkind languages she said to you," the little one went on.

"Why do you think that?"

"'Cause I've read the Manifesto."

"The *what?* What are you talking about, miss?" I spoke to her as if she were really grown. It greatly pleased her.

"The Manifesto that Cousin Robert Owen made up to invite 'ist evveybody to his town. Have n't you read it too?"

"No."

"You wait — while I fetch you mine. Cousin Robert gave it to me."

However, she did not go. She stood and slowly blushed very red. I began to realize that had she not been so desperately in earnest she would have been shy.

"Will you hold my bread-an'-jam while I'm gone?" Yet she lingered. Something was on her mind. "Please, I would n't mind if you'd eat it, Wanderman," she said, and then ran.

I realized that this was a polite ruse to give me something to eat. I stood puzzling about her until she came running back, the paper in her hand.

"Now, you can go to Harmony!" she cried, her slender little face all eagerness. "It's the prettiest town! Cunnin' 'ittle houses. An' bells that ring, Cousin Robert told me, an' such a pretty name. Don't you think 'Harmony' is a pretty name?"

I was already reading the printed letter which she gave me.

"A New Society is about to be formed at Harmony, Indiana, in Posey County, on the banks of the Wabash River. All persons are invited to become members of the Community who are in sympathy with the views of the Society."

The child followed my reading with most expressive face.

"You see," she said triumphantly, "you can go."

"But Mrs. Neef seemed to think —"

"Mrs. Neef!" She lifted her chin with infinite scorn. "That was n't my mamma. It was only Madame Barbier. She is French, an' we are French, so she stays long, long whiles at our house. Please don't listen to what she says!"

I stood studying the remarkable document. The members of the Community were to sign a constitution. They were to receive dwellings free on arrival, to provide only their own kitchen furniture and small tools, hoes, rakes, axes — What a picture of a new settlement!

I read on: "Mr. Owen has secured for the children and the young men and women of Harmony the best instructors that Europe can afford."

It was there! All that I wanted was in Harmony!

"Do you know," I said, meeting the bright, questioning face — "you have 'fixed it' for me, miss, whether you're angel or not. I surely will go to Harmony."

She clapped her hands in happy glee. "Tell me how you will go there."

"Just walking through the forest."

She contemplated this blissful prospect.

"Let me start with you," she pleaded. "Just a wee little way to Harmony."

"Won't you get lost?"

"No; father taught me the points of the compass."

She slipped her hand into mine. It was the tiniest hand I had ever felt, like a budding April leaf. And as we walked along, she skipped and pirouetted at my side

with toes that seemed barely to touch earth and leap again.

"Goin' to Harmony, Harmony-Town," she crooned believingly. I wondered how I should ever persuade her to go back. I was having to remake all my pictures of childhood. The shy, unspeaking children of the forest — my mother's little ones, myself — had been a different species from this gay infancy. I could no more guess her habits or desires than those of some tropical bird. Now she stopped her song.

"Are you a Wanderman?" she asked.

"I suppose so. At least I've tramped a lot."

"There's a lovely new song about a Wanderman. It's by Schubert, an' my mamma she sings it. It says —

"'Where art thou, where art thou,
Loved an' hooly ground —'

An' 'hooly ground' means heaven. The Wanderman wants to die an' go there," she added comfortably.

"Oh, but I don't want to die and go there," I laughed. "I'd rather stay in the forest."

"Then you're not a Wanderman," she concluded with regret: "not unless you're real unhappy." She stopped, deeply engrossed in her own affairs. "Oh, I know," she clapped her hands. "You shall be Saint George. Saint George always rides through the forest and kills dragons! Please say you are Saint George!"

I had no skill in such conversation. Besides, I was Scotch. "How can I say I'm Saint George when I'm not?" I asked. "Would n't that be a lie?"

The whole fabric of her joy fell at my word. I was full of remorse, but utterly unable to guess how I had hurt

her. I watched her while she stood blinking to keep back the tears. "I was n't sayin' it for *really*," she faltered.

"Yes, I'm afraid I took you wrong," I said.

"Well, not ezackly," she returned, with her gentle politeness; "you see, it — it was n't *pretend* — pretend 's just plain fibbin' an' turribly wicked."

"What was it, then?"

"It was *reallypretend* — that's the most fun in the world! Saint George is a *reallypretend*."

"All right. I'm sure I'm Saint George," I said, feeling very foolish.

But I was fascinated with the strange child. I found myself wishing that her journey to Harmony were not a make-believe. The little hand in mine gave me a delicate tenderness that gladdened and refined me too.

"Have n't you come farther than you meant?" I ventured at length.

"I believe I have. I'm lost. Oh, Saint George, always you rescue ladies. An' I'm a lady, named Dolinda. An' now I'm lost in the woods." Her eyes widened, but I could not for the world guess whether she was really afraid.

"I'll take you back," I comforted her. "Even at the risk of meeting your Madame Barbier."

"Madame Dragon, you mean."

At the gate again, she commanded, "Help me vault into the saddle, please."

"Into what?"

She pointed, with a confidential nod.

"Oh, yes, of course, how stupid of me!" I swung her up to her former seat upon the post.

All of a sudden the complete prettiness of her dream-

world appealed to me — the child-world from which I myself had been shut out.

"Dolinda," I said, "if you were *reallypretending* to be a little girl on a gatepost, what would your name be then?"

"Then it would be Columbine Neef. But you *know* it's Dolinda."

"Yes, I know. Good-bye, Dolinda." And remembering a courtliness I had seen in Audubon, I bent forward and kissed her hand. Her eyes shone. They were of a starry blueness which I afterward knew as the one beauty among the homely Owens.

"Oh, thank you, thank you, dear George!" she said.

Far down the road I realized that I still held in my left hand a slice of bread and jam indented with a tiny arc.

CHAPTER XIII

IN WHICH I COME TO MY TOWN OF DREAMS

It was in the spring of 1825 that I came to Harmony. I was in high expectation as I neared the town, for I knew that the next hour might decide the course of my life.

I was, as usual, penniless. I had spent my last money for axe and gun as required by the Manifesto. Would I be accepted? An acceptable appearance I certainly did not present. I stopped at a shady pool for a refreshing plunge.

Along my journey from Louisville, whenever I had inquired the way to Harmony, I had met with strange answers. Some laughed outright. One man said the town was being established to overthrow the Christian religion; another, that it forbade marriage; a third that Owen was out of his wits. A preacher asserted that I was traveling straight to hell.

But remembering Robert Owen and his sunny Scotch schoolroom, I had trudged ahead. I noticed that nobody ever showed a lack of interest in the place. Owen was effecting something there, and in that "something" I meant to have a hand if I could.

The forest about me was fresh and warm with spring. Some yellow parrakeets rose up at my approach and flashed chattering away. Doves all through the wood were calling to each other in the deep forest silences. Suddenly through the wilderness-mystery there sounded — far off — a bell. It struck four rich notes, then another high, clear bell began ringing a swift rhythm which all at once filled me with a sense of gayety and release.

These bells, so I afterward learned, were famed throughout the Western country. Sounding down the Wabash, they made the wanderer pause and turn to Harmony and never care to go away.

The road at every step became better tended and smoother. Then the wilderness ended and I was in the town.

It was an extraordinary place, unique in the wilderness. Had I known Europe I might have thought myself suddenly set down in some Old-World town. No straggling settlement this, of rude cabins and hovels, but a town largely of red-brick houses with quaint, hipped roofs, neat and alike. Solid public buildings occupied the center.

The dwellings were set flush with the street. One could shake hands from the pavement over the window-sills. The house-door was always at the side, opening into the gardens. The loghouses were of the same arrangement. The town was abloom with peach trees, which bordered the straight streets, shouldered the decorous houses, and thrust their fairy shade over the little gardens where hyacinths and tulips were springing. Cows were coming home up the street with tinkling bells. Well had my little maid said that Harmony was "full of bells that ring."

Moreover, the town was making holiday. Everybody was on the sidewalks — city men, sallow, ragged squatters, foreign folk, and men dressed in a costume I had never seen before, of white trousers buttoned up to a striped roundabout like little boys' suits. Ladies were abroad in curious long coats and astonishing Oriental pantaloons — the Community dress, as I afterward learned.

I passed eager talking groups.

"But we all know," I caught from one of these, "that

the arrangements of society have been wrong since the beginning of history. Haphazard; yes, sir, haphazard is the word. The needs of humanity should be met scientifically. Don't you think so, Mr. Jenkins?"

Strange sidewalk gossip, this!

Farther on, I passed one of the public buildings. It had a large "No. 4" over its doorway. Before it was a gathering of men and women seated on boxes or whatever came handy. I supposed they were listening to some mountebank or performer. But the man who was haranguing had a paper in his hand.

"It is all wrong," he said. "The present naming of cities. In every State of the Union is a Washington, a Mount Vernon, or a Uniontown. My sister's wedding dress was lost, traveling for months to these different Washingtons. In consequence — she was married in calico. I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, is this right? Now, I have a plan by which every town in the world can have its proper, unmistakable name. You arrange an alphabet to correspond with the numbers of latitude and longitude. Then, gentlemen, you take the latitude and longitude of a place, fit the letters into the places of the numbers — and there you are! London becomes Lafa Vovatu, New York, Otke Notive; Pittsburgh, Otfu Veitoup; Washington, Feili Neivul; our own New Harmony, Ipba Veinul; that is 38.11 N. and 87.55 W.!"

To my astonishment the crowd neither laughed nor objected. One young lady gravely suggested that Harmony was a prettier name than Ipba Veinul; upon which a third party announced that the entire argument now lay between beauty and utility. The company at once took sides and the dispute was on.

I began to feel like the prince in the old Arabian tale, snatched up overnight by the djinns and set down in distant Cairo. Fifteen minutes ago I had been in the familiar wilderness, now in this exotic little city. But no; Cairo was never so strange to Hassan as was this place to me.

Now the arguing was interrupted by a curious arrival. A stout, towheaded man came up the street, trundling a wheelbarrow, in which, like a dowager in her victoria, sat a capped and dignified old lady with the prettiest brown eyes I ever saw. With a flourish he set the barrow down.

"My mother," he announced in a high voice, "wishes to come to the concert. She is lame and cannot walk. We have no horse. I ask you in this community, where all dignities are equal, were it not better to take my mother thus conveniently than to leave her home?"

"Take her! Yes, take her!" they all cried.

"Oh, Mrs. Blythie, it's goin' to be a beautiful concert," said a young lady.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Blythie, twinkling, "my son is going to recite from Byron's 'Childe Harold.'"

"But," objected the man of latitudes, "the concert does not begin until seven."

"True, Mr. Whitwell," said the son. "But Mr. Owen has just received by the post a new volume of Scott. He sat up all night himself reading it, and has just placed it in the hall for public use. My mother wishes to get it first."

"Only think," put in the darling old lady, "the book hath in it a new story, 'Ivanhoe,' and some poetry. I canna possibly finish it a' this evenin'. Please make haste, Ariel. Happen some one would be ahead o' me."

Thus admonished, the stout Ariel made off with his cheery burden, the young people waving their hands to the lame little lady, who evidently was a favorite.

I hastened to put in my inquiries before the disputation should recommence.

"This Mr. Owen — where can I find him?" I asked diffidently.

One of the men obligingly answered: "He is pretty sure to be in the second greenhouse by the fort. That's where the committees mostly meet. Just along the street and in the garden beyond the next corner. Do you think of joining us?" he asked. "You'll find the place full of interest. Perhaps a little confused now in the beginning. But we're going to do great things!"

"Yes, young man," said another, "join us. You could n't do better."

"That's why I want to see Mr. Owen," I said.

"All right. Good luck!" they all cried after me.

I passed more brick houses, crossed the main street, and came to the grove with its white steeple house where hung the bells. The fences all ran along outside the sidewalks, thus enclosing the blocks entire, not separating the individual houses — a fine symbol of Community. This made the streets look like fenced lanes. To cross I had to go through turnstiles.

In the churchyard under the blossoming cherry trees, a school was holding session. The little folks each had a pad of paper and seemed to be drawing. The master was a shock-headed man, erect and military, with a resounding voice. He asked commandingly:

"Have you put in the cruciform hall — all of you — the steeple house, the rolling greenhouse, and the steam mill?"

To each item the children said yes.

"Now put in the labyrinth!"

The curly pates bent eagerly. There was a busy moving of pencils. I perceived that they were drawing a map of the town. But what extraordinary things this town contained!

"Now, maps in the cupboard — quick!"

The children stowed them away in a box under a tree.

"Hey, there, first tag!"

He gave a sounding tap on the shoulder of a little girl, who fled away like a doe with all the little ones after her — the teacher himself darting among the trees in the general scramble, shouting and laughing merrily with his pupils.

With light heart I crossed over into the garden. This school scene was all of a piece with that sunny schoolroom of old Scotland.

I passed what evidently was the "rolling greenhouse" — a slab house mostly windows, set upon rollers and without a floor. The structure had just been "rolled back" for the summer, leaving in the open, planted in the ground, a lemon tree in full bloom and other tropical plants. These were a great wonder to me. Beyond this I came to a similar greenhouse reconstructed. I entered and found myself at once in the business office of the Community.

Here behind a desk sat — not the Mr. Owen I had expected, but a youth of about twenty, with a slender, sensitive face, the only anxious face I had seen in the whole town.

Two lank, sallow-cheeked backwoodsmen had just entered. As he looked up at them, the young man's eyes

were hauntingly familiar — a gesture, and I knew that he must be close of kin to the Owen I was seeking.

"We 'lowed," the backwoodsman was saying — "we 'lowed this hyar was a right smart place, an' we might as well jine it even if it is sort o' crazy. I'm tired o' clarin' woods."

"An' I'm tired o' chills an' fever. Do ye hev the break-bone kind hyar?" asked the other wistfully.

"I'm sorry, gentlemen," said the young man, "but I really cannot accept you. There's not a vacant house in the place and many of our young men are sleeping in barns."

Not until I heard this answer did I fully realize how anxious I was to be received. However long it might take, I would await my chance. I would beset this young man until he should give me a place in Harmony. These two unhealthy scarecrows, I comforted myself, would be undesirable in any case. To my surprise, however, the woodsman reached into his boot.

"I wa'n't goin' to tell ye," he drawled, "but I got two hundred dollars I kin put inter the pool when I jine."

The young man shook his head.

"It is n't a question of money. The very necessities of life are not here. We cannot supply ourselves and we could not supply you."

He rose with gentle courtesy. "I am sorry," he said; "my 'no' is a final one."

"I allus heered this wuz a stuck-up place. Reckon ef we wuz dyked out like the balance of ye, ye'd take us, you damn 'ristocrat!"

"Wisht I could find som'e'rs whar they hain't ag'er," was the other's pathetic lament.

They both shuffled out.

The young man's face looked so distressed that on any other occasion I would have spared him. But my need urged me. "I'm afraid," I began, "that I have come on the same errand."

"But you see I must refuse you," he answered wearily. "My father heard a rumor after he got back to New York that the workers were leaving Harmony. He at once advertised for more mechanics to fill their places. Now we are deluged. Eight hundred people in three weeks! It is dangerous to gather people like this in the wilderness. There is no place even for them to sleep."

"I can sleep in the open; I have done nothing else for months."

"But in the winter?"

"In a few days I'd have me a log house built. By winter, with the help of a few men, I could build a score."

The young man came out from behind his desk, his face brightening. "Do you know about hewing and building?" he asked anxiously. "We have some axemen and laborers, but no one capable of taking hold and going ahead. Could you get the timber out of the woods and build houses?"

"I've done that sort of work all my life," I responded.

My heart went out to this young Owen. He was but a few years older than I. Yet the whole responsibility of the Community apparently rested upon him.

"But you are not a backwoodsman. At least you do not speak —" He stopped in embarrassment.

"I reckon I am a backwoodsman," I said. "But I don't mean to stay one. Mr. Owen, I want to get into your town more than I ever wanted anything in my life and I

do know the woods. I ought to be able to help you folks to live here in the woods."

His face relaxed its tension. "You are so greatly in love with the New System?"

"I don't know anything about your System. I only want to stay."

"But why, then?" he asked, amazed.

I felt my face flush. This quest of mine was hard for me to speak of.

"Because I want an education," I stumbled. "I suppose it seems impossible to you that a fellow my age should n't have that already. But I want scientific teaching and I can't get it anywhere else."

Young Owen seized my hand. "But that is best of all — the best thing a man could come for."

"Then I may stay?"

"Yes, yes," he said.

He had me write my name in the Community book — which I did with wonderful satisfaction.

"I don't know about your System," I explained, "but I do know what your father is — I have seen him in the Lanark School."

"In the Lanark School!" he cried.

This time he seized both my hands. I saw his face light as he spoke of home.

"You have been in dear Lanark? You have lived there?"

"No; I only spent one day there, the happiest day of my life."

"Blessings on you, man, you shall come home with me. You shall have my bed."

"No," I laughed; "I've said I'll sleep in the woods, and I will."

CHAPTER XIV

MAKING THE WORLD OVER AGAIN

We came out of the greenhouse office together. The setting sun was spraying mists of gold through the trees. And still the people were swarming everywhere.

"By the way," I asked, "what holiday is this?"

Young Owen laughed merrily. "No holiday. The town is like this all the time. The fact is — the people are so excited over the New Social System that they can do nothing but discuss it. After a while we hope that eight hours' work will suffice for each person — perhaps finally only three hours. But now, I must admit, the industrious ones do most of the work — the others go about dream-making. I cannot control that sort of thing. When my father comes again, all will be different."

We crossed the street. Young Owen climbed the fence, but I, without thinking, laid a hand on the top rail and vaulted it. I feared this might be bad manners, but he said enviously, "That's the last time I climb the street fence!"

"This is our great hall," he showed me, with pride. "We have a concert here to-night — in fact, every Thursday. You will enjoy it."

This was embarrassing. I could not tell him that I had never been to a concert in my life nor in fact to any social gathering except a log-raising.

"Oh, but you must come," he said, seeing my dubious look. "My father considers amusement a great human-

izing influence. It is part of The System. Besides, it is n't all music. There are speeches and discussions of The Principles."

"The Principles," I repeated. "Would you mind telling me something about them. Are they what make the town so unusual?"

"Yes, indeed. We hope to make Harmony different from any other town in the world, so preferable, so kindlier, that many towns — eventually all the world — will wish to become like it."

As he pronounced this dream of the town, his face filled with that buoyant look which I had seen on many Harmony faces.

"What are 'The Principles'?" I asked.

"It's a long story," said William Owen. "Stated briefly they are: *Community of Property; Equal Pay* for all sorts of work; *Education*, the best for all and at the public cost; *Freedom of Speech*. But the thing that strikes you first is that we have abandoned private property. That is, we are going to abandon it. We are at present a 'Preliminary Society,' not yet fully practicing The Principles — but training ourselves to do so. At the proper point, all will put their worldly goods into the common lot. At present my father owns the town, but he will allow the Community as a body to acquire it. No individual man or woman can ever acquire property here."

He took from his pocket a credit-book in which was written under date: "Wm. Owen has labored 10 hours in the Community store making an inventory of stock."

"Those hours, Mr. Way, are put to my credit in the Community store. You will receive the same for hewing timber and can exchange your credit of hours at the store

for anything you may require. You see, we abolish at one blow money, greed, and robbery. We abolish poverty and the fear of poverty."

My amazement kept me silent a moment. Of course, a hundred objections rushed upon me. "But can you pay all men alike?" I ventured.

"We intend to do so. Every man's hour is equal."

"What happens if one is lazy?"

"If he persists, he will be expelled by vote of the members."

"What about the man who works faster than the others?"

"He will be generous. We expect to remove every inner and outer occasion for greed. The vice itself will go in time."

The dream of Socialism was then new. But I had not been without glimpses of socializing efforts under Maclure. The New Harmony scheme was venturesome in the extreme; but I liked it. With what ease it sloughed off the world and began the serene life.

If it should succeed! I caught my breath as the wideness and scope of the dream overcame me.

"But why," I said, breaking my reticence, — "why has n't some one thought of this before?"

"True! It seemed to need just my father to think it through," said Owen ardently. The happy consummation was so real to him that it blotted out all difficulties.

The belfry above us sounded out the hour.

"Supper-time already!" he cried. "You must come with me."

The tavern was a place of generous room. A log fire burned in the wide chimney, for the night would be chill.

About the hearth were gathered men, women, and children. I noted again the animated talk, as if they were discussing some wonderful news.

Fortunately for my shyness, they were starting to the dining-room. But my respite was not long. William Owen took me in to the long table and, with an ease which I envied, presented me to the company.

There was William Price, the physician; Matilda Greentree, a pretty young lady to whom the young doctor seemed devoted; Josiah Warren, the leader of the town band, whom I afterward found to be a remarkable genius, both in mechanics and in social organization; Samuel Dransfield, in charge of the vineyards; George Flower, from Albion, a great friend of Harmony, who, as a matter of fact, had induced Owen to purchase Harmony from the Rappites. And there were many strangers visiting the town, looking about them with quietly amused eyes.

"Mr. Way," said Owen, "I'll seat you here by William Pelham. He can tell you of The Principles better than any of us."

"Oh, you must not say that," responded Pelham, rising. "You, Mr. Owen, are the one master of them here. But you may say that I am devoted to The Principles."

We sat down together.

"I'll tell you frankly," said Pelham, "I was never so happy in my life. I've always desired mental liberty. Here I enjoy it. I have left the world with its old Individual System. Nothing can ever draw me back into that vortex of mental tyranny from which I have escaped." He was most winning of manner, a slender-faced, light-haired man who gestured with deft hands. I afterward learned that he had been a surgeon.

"Pelham," broke in one from across the table, "you were saying, as we came out, that the bargain which God made with Satan was unfair to Job. Now tell us why."

Pelham leaned eagerly across his untasted plate. "It was unworthy the Creator of worlds. 'Do with him as thou wilt!' Can you imagine a kind God saying that in regard to you or me, giving the Devil free rein? I cannot imagine God saying that about the least of his creatures!"

(This, then, was the sort of "news" which they had been discussing out there by the fireside.)

"Then you would cast out the Book of Job from Holy Writ?" asked Flower.

"Oh, no, indeed. Job contains the most startling wisdom ever penned by man. It makes me dizzy with its beauty!"

"Ever penned by man" was a new phrase to use about the Bible. I listened tensely.

The discussion of Job merged into that of man's apprehension of God. Some said that God could not be known; others maintained that He could. The discussion flew back and forth across the table. The company lingered beside their empty plates until the exasperated hostess removed the cloth. Strenuous converse — truly! But my simplicity, long starved for the strike and spark of wit, found it invigorating.

I came out from the tavern table feeling mentally athletic and cleansed. As we reached the street, the steeple bell struck seven and we all hurried like eager children to the concert.

The great hall was a surprise here in the wilderness. It could easily seat a thousand people. There were, per-

haps, in Philadelphia buildings as large, but I had never entered such. It was lofty and echoed to the step. The inner domed hall measured seventy feet square, from which on the four sides four lower wings extended. The wings were two-storied and had many rooms on their upper floors. The main hall had a gallery running around well below the dome, leading off to these outlying upper rooms. Splendid timber pillars held up the dome and formed arcades to the transepts. They were of sassafras, walnut, and cherry, and were exquisitely channeled and fluted. Such a building gave dignity to the entire town. I could not imagine how the Owenites had come by it.

In the library wing sat our little old lady of the wheelbarrow, beaming over her book through horn spectacles. The table where she sat was littered with newspapers, pamphlets, and books. It was unheard of that such should be free to all. Candles lighted the whole place.

Now Warren and his band mounted the high gallery and were soon playing a rousing march. People began to flock in thickly in groups. I think the whole town was there. The visitors looked on with open amusement. Doubtless the company was easy to scoff at. They were a motley crowd — solid Englishmen, French people talking with the gesturing manner of their race, slow Kentucky mountaineers, Quakers, dour Scots and Scots with their heads in the clouds.

Now they stood up to sing their Community hymn. They knew it by heart: —

> "Oh, soon will come the glorious day
> Inscribed on Mercy's brow,
> When Truth shall rend the veil away
> Which blinds the nations now.

"The race of man shall wisdom learn
And error cease to reign,
The charms of innocence return,
And all be new again."

They sat down with a rustle of religious solemnity. They were not without fanaticism in their curious quest. Then Ariel advanced and delivered Byron's sounding lines most soundingly.

"There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her beauty and her chivalry —"

After this the martial schoolmaster and his brown-eyed wife sang a duet. The music of Mozart's "Magic Flute" was tuneless to my ignorant ears. The programme was impromptu — or nearly so. William Owen presided. To my surprise he next called Warren down from his band-gallery, who exhibited a lamp of his own invention — a lamp which burned lard. After Warren had explained its improved mechanism, the lamp was lighted; and by it William Owen read aloud an essay of his father, Robert Owen, entitled "The Model Village." This essay placed the responsibility for men's sins upon their surroundings. "Place men in right conditions and their faults will disappear. These right conditions will be secured in the Community at Harmony, where we confidently expect that the inhabitants to a man will become honest, industrious, and happy. True wealth is to be free to all members. The true wealths are these — air, water, food, health, clothing, instruction, amusement, mutual affection, and good society."

As they listened, the people grew excited. At the close of the reading three people sprang up to speak. Owen

gave the floor to one, who emphatically asserted that the Harmony Principles were sinful because they gave no room for the mercy of God.

Owen replied to this dogmatist kindly and, as I thought, convincingly. Next Warren, the musician-inventor, gave a really able argument for individual responsibility.

"Until the conscience of men," he said, "shall be far more awake than now, the members of Harmony should have a sharp incentive to work — some effective check upon laziness."

Alas, I know now how right Warren was.

It was a keen debate. While the discussion was still at its height, a precise Englishman arose with the air of one who had waited long.

"Pardon me if I change the subject," he apologized; "I wish to speak of the weather, not, however, in a flippant manner. The causes of weather-change should be sought out, recorded, and scientifically studied. I hope this will be done in our village. In time we shall be able to foretell the weather with accuracy. A greater convenience to mankind can hardly be conceived. I wish to show to all of you a rain-gauge which I have invented for registering —"

Here a lady arose.

"Ladies and gentlemen," she began in a rich, astonishing voice, though in person she was angular and altogether forbidding, "John does not mean that the weather could be easily or at once foretold. I will tell you what John means."

John melted down in his seat, and was heard no more. A titter went around the room, but the lady conquered it. Her discourse on meteorology was really interesting.

"Thot be Mistress Chapelsmith, his wife," said a Scot, poking me with his elbow. "They do say she weighs his food out ilka morn an' lets him eat only what properly nourishes the human frame. Puir mon!"

Apparently every person in the room had his pet quirk and theory and was feverishly desirous to air the same.

I began to have some slight misgivings. They were certainly a queer collection of people.

Suddenly everybody rose. Chairs were pushed back and piled up in the wings. The young people looked relieved. I saw Owen elbowing his way toward me.

"Come," he said, "we are dancing now. Our young ladies are waiting to meet you."

"Oh, no, I cannot. Indeed, I cannot." No one who has not known life in the great solitudes can understand the panic of shyness into which this summons plunged me.

"What is the matter?" asked Owen. "You dislike The Principles? Why did n't you rise and speak?"

"No — I liked them heartily. Only — but I can't dance."

"Well, then, of course you need not."

But I had seized my hat and almost ran from the building.

Outside the faint music of the reel was making blithe the moonlit street. I ardently wanted to dance with those white-dressed girls, I wanted to talk to them with that merry ease which Owen used. But I was eighteen — the age when shyness has its way with us. I would sooner have died than venture back.

I passed into the yard of the steeple church, found a sheltered corner in a clump of trees, wrapped my cloak about me, and lay down for the night.

CHAPTER XV

IN WHICH I DO THE GRAND TOUR

I AWOKE with the sun shining in my eyes and the sweet *carillon* sounding out "five o'clock" above me. I sat up. There under the tree was the box of the school-children's maps. It certainly ought to have been taken indoors.

Along the still streets the sun poured his light from the east. A warm breeze was stirring and showers of petals floated by me. Cherry and peach petals lay in drifts along the edge of the houses — the first unpitying wastage of spring.

In the remoteness of this early hour the voluble contrivings of the little town faded away, and in their stead stood forth the valiant dream, the high desire. I felt tender toward the place, as one does toward a bride because of her hope — tender and solicitous too.

Also I felt deeply at home. I seemed to sense my life of days as being spent here. I was young and utterly uncritical. Yesterday I had reserved some questions. Today I knew that I had become part of the winged, upbeating life that was — Harmony.

I walked along the green streets to the tavern, fetched my rifle and set out by the levee road across the bottomland. By the river was the same magic stillness. The Wabash rippled under the gentle breeze between its dreamy willows. Here I shot down a turkey and returned with it to the Community Tavern.

"I want to get my meals here," I told our hostess of

last night. "But I'll have to pay for them with game every morning. Will you let me do that?"

"'Deed an' I will," she answered, "if ye'll bring reg'lar. We're always gettin' too much or none at all. Mostly none. They're all so full of their dreamin' they can't do nothin' dependable."

The woman little knew that she was speaking to the most arrant dreamer of them all.

After breakfast I made the grand tour of the town. Every newcomer made this tour of Harmony before setting to work. The workshops astonished me by their number and still more by their swing of work. The woolen and merchandise mills were run by a steam engine of sixty-horse power, an astonishing sight in this region. The cotton-spinning mill was in full operation. Every one was bright and expectant in his work. It is no wonder that, a little later, Robert Owen said their happy faces gave him one of the greatest joys of his life.

The huge copper kettles of the dye-house glimmered in the shadows. But this establishment was not yet manned. In the hat-plaiting room the young girls chattered and laughed at their pretty work. Besides, I saw tinners, shoemakers, turners, coopers, printers, stocking-weavers, saddlers, smiths, and wheelwrights busy in their places like a merry hive. And something like a hive, too, in their confusion. If the work was somewhat haphazard, still good cheer was everywhere and everywhere the word was, "It will be better when Robert Owen returns and we are in running order."

They told me that all these establishments had been taken over from the Rappites, a curious German religious sect who had built the town. Their toilers had been

heavy and dull. But Robert Owen had filled the place with happy life. And all for no selfish profit, but as part of a far-outreaching project for humanity.

I now returned to the center of the town for the pleasantest part of my inspection — the schools. I came to a solid German mansion, surrounded by an exclusive wall with large gateposts. I made no doubt this had been the home of Rapp, the old religious leader. I was passing along the wall when I saw on the ground a bit of bright paper — a lady carefully cut from some gay fashion book. I stooped to pick it up when a voice high above me called out, "Oh, don't pick her up, please, sir. She's dead. My children will faint if they see her!"

I looked up to behold, perched in a tree, my little maid, my fairy of Louisville — none other! There she sat with an accomplice. A board across the branches held their paper playthings.

"Why, Dolinda — Columbine, I mean," I cried in delighted confusion.

At sight of my upturned face she caroled with glee, "Saint George-an'-the-Dragon! It's you! It's you!"

She clambered down to the wall and reached out her hands for me to lift her off. When I did so, she put up her mouth to be kissed. I performed the office with consummate awkwardness and set her down.

"Why did n't you tell me you were coming too?" I said.

"'Cause mamma, she did n't tell me."

I was so delighted that I was half ashamed of my delight. A certain loneliness departed from me at sight of her slender little face. I stood swinging the hand she gave me, not knowing what to say.

"My brother Victor," she prattled, "he said you fooled me 'cause I was 'ist only a 'ittle girl. But you comed anyway."

"Yes, indeed! Yes, indeed!"

"Did you kill heaps of dragons? Is that what kept you so long?"

"Heaps and heaps," I answered dutifully. "Besides, I had to earn my living. When folks gave me a dinner, I had to stop and do some work for them."

The tiny fashion-doll started wafting down the breeze. I caught it.

"Oh, please don't!" cried the little maid: "my child Badoura's *so* 'fraid of ghosts."

"Ghosts! Great sakes, what are you at now?"

"Don't you see?" she said. "When they fall down out of the tree, they're dead. Then they have to be ghosts. We have lovely funerals — an' we never, never pick 'em up."

"But you lose all your dolls a windy morning like this," I objected.

"Yes, it's awful sad. But," she added, brightening, "we begin all over to-morrow. In the morning everybody's alive."

I thought the phrase reached farther than the dolls. For truly it was morning in Harmony, and "everybody alive!"

"Did you look at all the Harmony places like everybody does?" she asked.

"A good many of them," I told her.

"All alone by yourself?"

"Yes."

"How did you know where to find 'em?"

"I found a big steam mill by its clatter."

"Steam mill!" contemptuously; "I know nicer things than that!"

"Then will you show me?"

"Yes," with a skip of accomplished purpose. "An' Cécile she knows 'em too." She pointed to her friend in the tree, who had been gazing down at us with the deliberate silence which children use.

"Both of you come," I said.

But Cécile shook her head. "I must go back to school and so must you, Colley."

"I don't have to go to school 'cause I'm delicate," said Columbine pridefully.

Across the way the school-children were singing. Underneath the high, sweet voices boomed a fine bass, which I made no doubt was the martial schoolmaster's.

"Would you rather see the fort or the stone the angel stepped on?" inquired Colley as guide.

"I always like the stones best," I answered.

She led me into the great gate.

"This is the big mansion where Rapp lived," she said — "an' there's the stone."

Among the common flags of the path was a huge limestone slab which bore the imprint of two feet as plain as footsteps in sand. It also bore a curious scroll. I knelt down at once to examine it.

"It was the Angel Gabriel that stepped there," vouchsafed Columbine. "An' he told ole Rapp to go quick an' build the great hall an' make it like a cross, 'cause it was from an angel. An' so they did it that way."

"The hall where the concert was last night?" I asked.

"Yes. But papa says the angel's a superstition. It's

just only the footprint of some man that lived ever-an'-ever-an'-ever ago. I think pre-'stor-ic man's nicer than angels, don't you?"

"I do, indeed," I said, fitting my foot into the print.

"But who is your father, Columbine?" I asked suddenly.

"Why, don't you know? He's the teacher. Listen. That's his voice singing — that one 'at sounds like a big bumble-bee. He's teachin' them the 'Peztalozzian System,'" she recited proudly.

"What is his name?"

Her face blossomed delightfully. "Francis Joseph Nicholas Neef. That's the way the scholars sing it."

This had been the author's name of the little book from which Maclure had taught me long ago. I questioned the child about it.

"Yes, he writed a book," asserted Columbine — "a cunnin' 'ittle book with brown covers. But — but," she confessed, "I don't like the insides."

"I do. It taught me to read. Come, let's go to the school now," I cried eagerly.

We crossed over to the substantial "No. 2." In one of the great rooms of the first floor Mr. Neef was busy with a recitation. He stopped, however, to greet me, and on my inquiry told me that the schools were now only in their beginning. Most of the teachers had not yet arrived.

"But come to see me this evening," he added cordially. "I can help you to something at once."

I was gladdened by the offer.

The second floor was a dormitory — a long room with just-invented cots hanging like hammocks from the ceiling. Harmony was full of "just-invented" things.

"They're the mostest fun," asserted Columbine. "You wait till evveybody's asleep, then you swing *hard* an' hit your next one. An' your next one hits the next one; an' it goes right on clear to the end bumpin' an' bumpin', an' the end one, she tumbles out!"

Columbine led me to the top floor, where, to my confusion, she suddenly opened the door upon her mother's apartments.

"He's come," she cried, dragging me in. "Saint George is come. I told you he would come!"

Madame Neef rose from her sewing to greet me.

"Well, well; I had believed that you were only a dream of Columbine's. I never can tell." She turned to introduce me to her older daughters, whom I recognized as having been among the very girls I had fled the night before.

"Is George your first name or your last?" she asked.

"That's only your little girl's name for me. I am Seth Way."

"We are sorry you did not stay for the dance," said Miss Wilhelmina.

"But I can't dance."

"Were you lame when you were 'ittle?" inquired Columbine sympathetically.

We came downstairs again to the street. The child led me southward out beyond the village to where the neat fields began.

"And where are we going now?" I asked.

"Oh, to see the best of all," she cried rapturously. She took a ball of twine from the pocket of her full-gathered skirt. "We could n't find our way out without this," she said with infinite mystery.

We passed the long ropewalk and turned sharply into

a neat Old-World garden. The path led between high beech and yew hedges and turned, now right, now left, in misleading directions. I looked down at my companion. Her childish face was full of suppressed glee. That very instant I found myself expelled to the outer wood again.

Columbine danced on her tiniest of feet. "You can't get to the middle if you try ever so! It's a labyrinth!" she announced.

"What is it for?" I was half ashamed to ask.

"It's for a grown-up game! The bestest game! You turn an' turn, but you can't find the *Gartenhaus* in the middle."

I was ignorant of classic story. It seemed a childish contrivance for grown people to invent or enjoy.

"Shall I be Ariad-ne?" she asked breathlessly. "'Cause I know the clue. My brother Victor showed me over-an'-over till I learned it. You 'll be Theseus."

"But I thought I was Saint George."

She looked at me despairingly. "You can't be St. George *all* the time. That's no more fun than bein' yourself. Anyhow, you could n't be Saint George in a labyrinth."

I followed, submissive, until at a surprising turn we came to the beautiful lodge at the center. It was eight-sided and built, with the cunning contrivance of the Germans, of tiny eight-sided blocks. It had diamond windows and a door of a single walnut slab, and was covered with grape and convolvulus vines now in spring leafage. Columbine opened the door and we entered the hidden, cozy room. My little maid, with her quick sensing of mood, did not speak, only watched my astonished face. Did some premonition of my own joys forelighten me in

this little room? The Rappites had built it for a religious symbol, but surely some spirit beyond their ken framed it for my future love-making. I was suddenly very peaceful and happy.

As we came back to the village, William Owen met us almost at a run.

"I could not find you nor where you lodged last night," he cried. "I was afraid you were gone."

"Never fear that!" I assured him.

"But you were disappointed at the meeting?"

"No, I liked it. How could I fail to like it?"

"Then you will help me?" he said anxiously. "I have just received a letter from my father." He was still holding it open in his hand. "Father is sending me more mechanics again. I don't know what to do."

"Can't you get him word to hold them back?"

"But he is so eager. There is no restraining him. He'd as soon fly to the moon as reject any one who asked to come."

It was young William who seemed the responsible father, and Robert Owen the headlong son. "Father writes to put them in the steeple church and the granary. Now the church is used by the school, and the granary is full of corn. Father says to partition off rooms. But we have no lumber and the sawmill is under water!"

"We must have the log houses at once," I said eagerly. "If you can give me some men, we will get at it right away."

And little Columbine put in softly, "Saint George is goin' to kill *your* dragons, too, is n't he?"

"What? You here, chicken?" William took her slender cheeks between his palms and kissed her. There was in

the salutation a respectful tenderness I had not seen toward children save as Robert Owen used it long ago in New Lanark. I dumbly wished for such expressiveness.

"Come, Mr. Way," said Owen brightly, "let's get to work!"

CHAPTER XVI

COMMUNITY WORK

We managed to get together three fairly good axemen and a dozen backwoodsmen, and with these we set to work. The axemen stayed with me less than a week, then went off roaring drunk with half the others. We were beginning to find our "settler" element for the most part pretty shiftless. But by dint of incessant urging and contriving, I managed to get a great quantity of logs cut, squared, and hauled into place in the town.

After some three weeks of this strenuous timber-work, I went to Mr. Owen. "We have a big lot of logs ready," I said; "enough for eleven houses. And now if we could have a general 'frolic,' we could probably raise them all in one day."

"A frolic?" he repeated. "What is that?"

It had not occurred to me that Europeans had no need of "frolics" as had we backwoodsmen.

"Why, it's really a 'house-raising.' When a couple in the settlements are married, the neighbors get together for a bee and raise a cabin for them."

"What a kind thing to do," said Owen.

"But if our whole Community could get together, as many as you could possibly spare from the shops, we could raise and cover them all in a day."

"That's great," he cried. "We'll have the 'frolic' to-morrow!"

"But you could n't get ready to-morrow," I objected. "There always has to be a barbecue!"

This entailed more explanation, but William was enthusiastic. Then into what a bustle and excitement the town was thrown! I was abashed at being the originator of it all. On the night before the "frolic" we built a great log fire in a pit, and over the coals, on a huge iron turn-spit, we hung the ox for roasting. We had previously filled the ox with ducks, chickens, and prairie hens — a feast for the entire town. Everything was a delightful surprise to William.

"What!" he exclaimed, "fowl inside the ox? What for?"

"To be roast-smothered, of course," said Aunt Sammy. "If ye hain't ever et fowl roast-smothered, ye hain't never really *et* 'em."

Next morning the women were on hand in the grove with their baskets of bread and butter, cheeses, jams, and other mysterious dainties. Rich and poor, as the outside world would have called them, the women all worked together. The men, however, separated into groups on the sites of the several cabins. Neef, Warren, Chapelsmith, Pelham, and our other savants, drifting naturally together, were soon engaged upon one cabin. Our settler members and mechanics worked apart upon others. Equality was not easy to come by. However, we were to come by it of necessity that day.

"Now, Mr. Neef," I said respectfully, "you must lay the bottom logs with their notches upward — so. Then notch and fit the first cross-logs upon these. But at four logs high you must put in the logs with the extra notches to take the floor beams."

We had already dressed the logs in the woods, and now young Victor Neef and others were busy notching them. I supposed that for such learned men a word would suf-

fice, so I now hurried off to the other cabins. The settlers were already grumbling that they "never yit raised a cabin without whiskey. What kind o' barbecue was it, anyways, with no likker?"

"But you have had no liquor since you have been here," said Owen. "You know that's one of the rules." It was with difficulty that he pacified them.

A little later I returned to the cabin of the "wise men" to find Neef and Pelham discussing with great animation the wonders of the crowbar.

"I have often studied the fulcrum and lever," said Neef, "but I never realized its vast power until we lifted that log just now. No wonder Archimedes said, 'Give me the fulcrum and I will lift the world'!"

Warren was sitting down quite tired out with his unusual exertions. Only Victor Neef kept busy. He was notching logs in a way that showed him an expert. I thought, however, that the rising walls of the cabin looked insecure and made bold to examine them.

"Why, Mr. Neef," I exclaimed, "who laid up these logs without any corner notches?"

"I suppose I did it," confessed Neef, peering over the logs with his near-sighted eyes. "Dear me, I quite forgot the notches."

I noticed now with embarrassment that the notched logs for the floor beams had also been left out. But I hesitated to call attention to this fact.

Here Victor Neef threw down his axe and came over to us. "In trouble again, father?" he asked.

When he saw the bungled work, he threw back his handsome head and laughed again. "Oh, father, now that's too bad. I said you could n't do it."

"But, I wish to be of service to the Community."

"Is that a service?" pointing to the toppling logs. "Why, father; the first man to step into your cabin would have it down about his head. No housewife would dare rock a cradle in it. Oh, father, father — ! Here, Seth, give me a lift."

He wanted me to help him dismantle the cabin before his father's very eyes — which, of course, I would not do. Then I saw that Neef was laughing still more heartily than his son, and that Victor's laughter was full of a fond pride.

"The only time that father ever saddled a horse," said Victor to me, "he put the thing on backward. Now, confess, father."

"I think, Victor, you had better work close at my elbow," said the master of a dozen languages.

"I'll tell you, Seth," spoke Victor. "Bring some of those grumbling backwoodsmen over here. They know the tricks. And put some of these literary fellows over yonder. Mix 'em up, mix 'em up. Is n't this a Community of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, — Vagary and Extravagancy? Let's try it!"

So, thanks to Victor Neef, the "building frolic" was a great success, and twelve cabins were raised and roofed with bark. The "savant" cabin, duly made safe with ignorance, became the home of Dr. Price and Matilda Greentree who were married that week.

I immediately went to work again at the timber-felling, for the need of more cabins was still great.

I said nothing further to Mr. Owen of my desire for study. There was plainly no chance for it now. I did allow myself Mr. Neef's evening geography class. Mr. Neef

also offered me a private hour of Latin twice a week. This I needed for my classifications. But as the days grew longer and hotter, I was so very tired after my work in the woods that I found myself regularly going to sleep in class. And in my Latin I was so stupid that Mr. Neef must have set me down as a dullard. Only on Sunday did I take rest and recreation. I would go forth in the afternoon to the dove-haunted wood, or study the rocks along the Wabash, collect shells, and catch butterflies. I now for the first time had a place for my collections. This was the garret room of the kindly, happy-hearted William Pelham. Never for one moment did Pelham seem to forget the relief and gladness of his Community life.

"Oh, what use to complain!" he would cry when the mosquitoes hung cloud-like about his head and he was vainly trying to write. "Have we not our freedom at last, freedom in self-expression and self-respect. In Zanesville last year mosquitoes were a great annoyance. Here I hardly feel them. Such is the effect of a serene mind!"

Pelham was the editor of our "New Harmony Gazette" and the author of its motto, "If we cannot reconcile all opinions, let us endeavor to unite all hearts." His editorial work was done in his little garret, yet he gave me room for my butterflies and shells.

At first I "naturalized" alone. But one day little Columbine looked so wistfully after me that I took her with me. And this became our habit.

"I will walk with you," she said one day, "if you're just gatherin' shells, but not if you're catchin' butterflies."

"Don't you think butterflies are pretty?"

"Oh, yes; but it's the pins."

"It does n't hurt them."

"It hurts me," she answered.

I easily promised to catch no butterflies that day, and we started off together.

We were both kneeling, her tiny hands and my great ones in the Wabash mud after shells, when a splendid specimen of *Papilio asterias*, unusually marked, sailed by in its characteristic soft, reluctant flight. Without a thought I sprang up and caught it, took out card and pin, and impaled it forthwith.

Then I heard a cry and saw my little Columbine stumbling along the shore, head down, as fast as she could go. I ran after her.

"Don't mind," I said; "I've put it under my hat where you can't see it."

A slight shudder was her only response and the tiny figure ran faster. She seemed afraid of me.

"You must n't care so much for a broken butterfly."

"It is n't the butterfly," she sobbed, still hurrying. "It's — it's the promise."

"Why, Colley, I just forgot. Don't be angry."

"It is n't angry I am," she said Irishly.

I was very remorseful. I had offended something deeper than the childhood of her, a certain faith-keeping innocence that was the very dye and color of her character; which, indeed, was to remain, looking straightforward from her dear eyes when she had grown up, with her long dresses and her thirty curls. Very humbly and ashamed I followed her back to town, all unmindful of my muddy knees and hands.

CHAPTER XVII

THE COMING OF ROBERT OWEN

Evenings after my day's work, I frequented the library wing of the great hall, drawn by the cheerful candles and the outspread books. Here I tried to read, drowsing more or less. One evening I was roused by a hand on my shoulder. It was William Owen.

"Why, Way," he said, "what are you doing here at this ungodly hour?"

"Trying to read. Making a dunce of myself, I guess."

"It's I who have been the dunce," said William warmly. "Why did n't I see how much you were trying to do?"

"I'm all right."

"You are not. Neef says you are too exhausted for study. And study is what you are here for."

"No hurry about that. The cabins must be pushed."

"Not at your expense. If I catch you working over hours again, I'll have you expelled!"

I laughed.

"But I mean it," asserted William. "And Pelham tells me you are huddling your fine collections of butterflies and shells in his room. Don't you know that we are eager for such collections? There is space for them in the east wing of this hall and we have cases ready. Can't you and I transfer them before father comes?"

His kindness made me very glad of heart, but as usual I could not speak what I felt. We walked out into the October night.

"I have good news," said William gayly. "Good for

me and for us all. My father has landed in Baltimore. He'll soon be here and relieve me of my load. He'll set everything right."

The coming of Robert Owen now displaced all other topics of conversation among us. One day it would be, "Owen is in New York. He writes that he has secured us a good dye-master." Then, "He is in Philadelphia conferring with learned people." Again, "William has a letter from Washington. Robert Owen has been addressing Congress on the subject of Coöperative Towns. He has exhibited his plaster model of an ideal coöperative establishment. The American statesmen are enthusiastic. Perhaps Congress will at once legislate on the lines of our New System."

Thus did we throw rein over the neck of our fancy and gallop on!

At Pittsburgh Robert Owen purchased a keelboat to bring down the Ohio River a company of distinguished scholars and scientists from France, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, and Scotland. They had arranged to meet him at Pittsburgh. This company was the amazing fulfillment of his promise to provide the best teachers for his model community. Indeed, they constituted a faculty in many respects superior to that of any American university of the day. This keelboat Owen named "The Philanthropist," but we forthwith dubbed it the "Boatload of Knowledge," under which title it has taken its place in history.

At these tidings we made great jubilation, calling out our militia in their new uniforms, and our band to play and parade the streets in the moonlight. There was a great deal of band playing and parading in Harmony.

Robert Owen was coming! Who in the Community could think or talk or dream of aught else! It was not that this man was the owner and proprietor of the town. He was its personification. And from him, its originator, was to come forth the new wisdom, the new salvation of society.

Late in November we learned that the "Boatload of Knowledge" had been caught up the Ohio in an early freeze. William Owen received a voluminous letter from this forced harborage. He shared it with me, little knowing how its news would shatter all my hope of living in Harmony.

"It's better and better!" he cried. "Father has formed a connection with a Mr. Maclure who is a famous scientist and a man of wealth as well. Maclure has bought a large interest in the Community and is throwing himself into our scheme with all his might."

"Do you mean William Maclure?" I asked blankly.

"Yes."

"Not William Maclure, of Philadelphia?"

"Yes; that's the man. He is with the 'Boatload of Knowledge' and a lot of his scientists from the Philadelphia Academy. He is going to have entire charge of education at New Harmony." William was so elated that he did not notice my agitation.

I hurried away as quickly as I could. My little world had been quietly, casually, pulled from under my feet. What could I do? Where could I turn? All the afternoon I sat alone in my garret room among my specimens trying to think my trouble through.

Maclure was coming! He was coming here, to Harmony! I vexed myself with trivial possibilities — that

I could stay, could live and work in some separate part of the town. But Maclure was to be head of the schools, which were my chief need. I could not pass Maclure like a stranger on the street and retain my self-respect. At moments my sheer longing to see his face broke down every consideration. Yet all through my thinking I knew that my decision was inevitable. I must go away.

I determined to say nothing about my departure. It would only involve me in painful and fruitless explanations. I would remain in Harmony until the "Boatload of Knowledge" should be at hand and then would quietly slip away. Beyond my departure I did not plan. The hurt was deep. I knew only that I should wander awhile before I could settle down to anything.

One evening at the mid-week ball Columbine danced the Highland fling. Clad in kilt and jacket, with tartan sash over her shoulder, she flitted through the swift figures like a bird, her tiny feet barely flicking the ground. Columbine's dancing was a matter of course. All Harmony children danced. A circle in the midst of the great floor was always marked off for them.

From a far seat in the library wing I moodily watched the little girl's performance. As she finished, I turned idly and fell to studying the great map of the two hemispheres which hung on the wall. It was an idea of Robert Owen's that the dancers in their pauses might unconsciously study these maps and increase their knowledge of the earth's surface.

I felt a touch upon my arm. It was the little kilted Columbine. "Saint George, will you please dance with me?" she pleaded.

Should a bear dance with a humming-bird? I shook my head.

"It is n't p'lite for ladies to ask gentlemen," she apologized. "But — you'll understand the exiggusness this time — won't you?"

I assured her very seriously that I understood the "exiggusness" and rose up to please her. In the half-light of our corner I put my monstrous boots through the motions which she set me. But all in the midst of this playing my heart failed me. I abruptly bade my little maid good-night and hurried away.

Meanwhile the "Boatload of Knowledge" had got free of the ice and was again floating down the Ohio. The morning after my little maid's dancing, a trader came into our Community store and announced that he had seen Owen with thirty persons at Mount Vernon, directly south of us. So I knew that now within a day or two the keelboat would work up the Wabash River and arrive at New Harmony.

But that very same afternoon a short, sturdy-looking man drove up to the tavern. It was Robert Owen! I should have known him anywhere. How like him to break away from the slow-moving keelboat and run the last miles to us like an impatient colt. He was the same swift Robert Owen of my childhood, not changed, but exuberant with enterprise and glad beginnings.

William, at the moment, was coming out of the tavern. "Father, father," he cried, and climbed into the carriage before it stopped. He threw both arms about his father and kissed him.

"William, my dear boy, I left you longer than I meant!" cried Owen.

He stepped from the carriage and at once a dozen of us were about him. He greeted each one as if he had always known us. "Young man, I am glad to see you here" (this to me). "Mr. Pelham; yes, William has written me much about you." Amid the jubilation he darted to drag his great portmanteau from the carriage, then his bundle of shawls, then a bag. He was talking all the time.

"Wait, father, wait!" cried William. And as fast as Owen pulled them out, William kept putting them back again. "But, father," he laughed, "I have a room for you at the mansion. We will drive over to the mansion." But Robert Owen heard him not at all.

At last William gave it up. "Hello, there's the steeple house bell," he said.

In truth the big bell was pealing the news to the town and farmside. Now the children came pouring from the schools, singing the Community hymn of welcome. The band played. The town went wild with joy.

That evening in the early twilight the people flocked to the steeple house to hear Robert Owen speak. For he always made a public address on arriving anywhere. But here — ! Promptly at eight he mounted the pulpit amid our cheers.[1]

He did not speak at once. He was summing up his flock which had come to him out of the unfriendly world. This was Robert Owen's first view of his own New Har-

[1] Note by Columbine Way:
I begged father not to set down this long speech, fit only for a serious history of Harmony and not for father's romance. But he answered that a single utterance of Owen's was more important than all the deeds that Seth Way ever did. So I have let him leave it in. But any one who is more interested in father can just skip the speech and it will be all right.

mony. A year ago he had come and purchased a Rappite Harmony. He had seen the quaint Old-World religionists depart with George Rapp, their prophet and master. He had issued his call to all people who were minded to try with him the "Great Experiment" of social brotherhood. Then he had been obliged to return to Scotland. Meanwhile his call had been answered beyond all expectations in numbers that had overwhelmed the town. Now for the first time he looked upon his "Preliminary Society" — his "Halfway House."

The crowd was still cheering noisily; but Owen was utterly self-unconscious. His great, homely face grew in benignity until his affection seemed to open and pour out upon us — a sensible force. No wonder this man could utter all manner of dismaying novelties and yet win no man's enmity.

Then he included us all in a gesture, and there fell an expectant silence.

"My friends," he began, "you have done better than I hoped. In every way the Community is more complete than I expected. I congratulate you. I heartily congratulate you."

Owen always saw his hopes thus, as complete and already realized.

"I am in this country," he went on, "to introduce an entire new state of society; to change it from the ignorant Selfish System to an enlightened Social System, which will gradually unite all interests into one and remove all causes of contest between individuals.

"You, my friends, have joined forces with me to launch this great enterpise in the free land of the wilderness, an enterprise which I firmly believe is fraught with

more good to the human race than any essay that has been made since the beginning of civilization.

"You have already experienced some of the benefits of this new mode of living; but when our town shall be running smoothly, as it will be in a few weeks, then you will, in truth, be astonished at your own happiness. You will be astonished at your relief from strain, the ease with which you can live a virtuous and kindly life. You will have no occasion to bargain or cheat your neighbor; you need not fear that unless you give constant attention to your own selfish interests the world will make a slave of you. Poverty will be abolished, and, better still, idleness will be abolished. For each of you will be provided with some suitable, happy task, which it is your special right to perform for the good of all."

Here Owen rehearsed some rules of the Community. We were guaranteed:

"Equality of rights, uninfluenced by sex or condition.

"Equality of duties — modified by physical and mental conformation.

"Coöperative union in business and amusement.

"Community of property.

"Absolute freedom of speech.

"But, after all," he insisted, "these rules are but the empty moulds of life. We must be trained, morally and mentally, to take advantage of them. We must have the best conceivable education, rich thoughts, and trained skill to fill these empty moulds. Such education the Community of New Harmony shall afford you.

"There is coming up the Wabash to-day a boat which contains more learning than was ever contained in any

boat!" (Here the crowd broke into wild cheering and applause.)

"I mean not the dead learning of the past, but the learning which faces the future. There are naturalists, botanists, geologists, mathematicians, artists, engravers, scientific teachers of the young, chemists, philanthropists, and skilled instructors in every needful craft and husbandry. All these, my friends, are at your service, for you and for your children!"

Deafening applause broke out again.

But what a desolation of loneliness fell upon me. In the midst of this noisy enthusiasm I was apart — hearing, as it seemed, from afar. This precious endowment of knowledge was theirs, not mine, not mine!

Then I heard Robert Owen resume.

"But above all, our success lies in a serene and loving mind. This, my friends, must be the personal achievement of each one of you. Remember, a sharp speech, an unjust deed, a quarrel, is a greater blow to The System than any mistake can possibly be."

Here his speech seemed to end. Long applause followed it. But Owen did not seem to hear. He stood apparently looking down at a group of miserable waifs from the bottoms who had crowded close about him. He was seeing neither them nor us. Then with a swift, fine movement, he lifted his head. There was a sudden daring in his eyes. A shock of silence went through the assemblage. We knew he was about to say something unexpected even to himself.

"My Communists of Harmony," he said, "let me now ask you: Are you fully prepared to break asunder the remaining bonds which for so many ages have enslaved

our nature? Are you prepared to give full freedom to the human mind? Are you willing to imitate your ancestors of 1776 when they signed their Declaration of Independence? Are you willing to incur contempt and enmity for the emancipation, not of the Thirteen Colonies, but of the human race? I myself am most willing to join you in this venture, the last and most daring that remains for man to achieve in his irrational state."

The people held their breath for a moment in puzzled silence, then broke into quick, encouraging applause.

Owen smiled. "I see you have willingness," he said. "Then I tell you, man must be free from this trinity of basic evils:

"First, individual property.

"Second, absurd systems of religion.

"Third, marriage as founded upon such individual property and such religious systems.

"The first of these we have already banished from New Harmony. We must attack the other two."

As he spoke his body seemed to fill with breath. He seemed actually to grow taller and his voice rang with the sudden clarion of spiritual exaltation. He assaulted the existing rival sects and narrow theologies. In those days of literalism and credulous faith this was a perilous outspeaking. He attacked the abuses of marriage. This utterance was still more perilous. He maintained that the present marriage customs were devised to keep wealth among certain favored groups, and to keep the favored children of those groups apart from the toiling multitude.

"Marriage should neither be left to chance," he declared, "nor should it ever be arranged on sordid grounds. It should be capably watched over by authority and be

permitted only between those of equal education, whose affections are sincere and thoroughly tested. When a marriage has been found to be an irreparable failure, it should be annulled. But such extreme care should be taken beforehand to confirm the affections that marriage under the New System would in actuality outlast the artificial and the passionate marriages of the world.

"Truth has passed from me beyond recall!" he proclaimed. "It has passed into your minds. It will be heard throughout America and thence will pass north, east, south, and west!"

So he finished. Wild excitement prevailed. Some members ran to him with tears in their eyes and caught his hands, some doubtfully hung back, some set in silent anger or talked angrily among themselves. Such an utterance was bound to create misunderstanding, whether true or false. Wise or unwise, it was certain to create antagonism both within and without the Community.

The crowd came out into the streets, talking excitedly and laughing with release from tension. Pelham and I walked home together without a word between us. I was preoccupied with unhappy thoughts of departure; Pelham was too deeply moved for speech.

We prepared for bed. Pelham, blowing out the candle, broke silence.

"This is the most startling experience of my life. We shall hear from this, Seth Way! We shall have trouble."

"We should not," I said stoutly; "whether he be right or wrong, this man is manifestly seeking truth and right. Why cannot people trust a man so sincere, so transparent in goodness?"

"Well, they'll not do so. You will see. Owen in his

own marriage has been from early youth perfectly happy and regular. He is only theorizing for others. But people will not believe that."

"Anyway," I said ardently, "I am glad he expressed his full thought and that I heard him."

"So am I, so am I!" cried Pelham.

Then the floodgates of talk being open, we discussed the speech, the town, The System. We kept it up without pause until morning.

CHAPTER XVIII

IN WHICH I FLEE FROM THE COMMUNITY

I AWOKE late and found myself in a dull depression. So this was to be my last day in New Harmony! To-morrow the keelboat and Maclure would arrive and I must go.

Pelham was already up and away. It was hard to go out upon the little, snowy streets already so familiar, so full of home. After my regular duties I spent this day trying to perfect the arrangement of my shell collection. Usually nothing is more quieting to me than such an occupation. Once at it, the world retires afar and unbroken peace settles upon me. I think it is the great beauty of the shell forms and the perfect fitness to their use which quiets my soul to its uses. But to-day peace was not with me. I made a dozen mistakes and had to rectify them. I wanted to leave this collection in good order for the Community. But I had to give it up. I went over to the tavern where I tried to listen to the animated discussions of the speech.

Next morning after breakfast I took my axe and gun as usual and — walked out of the town. Suddenly I was able to go. I knew I should not see again the little gray-roofed houses, the pump by the steeple house at which I paused to drink, the ropewalk. Yet I did not look at these with any sense of farewell. All was commonplace, as if I were going through a daily routine.

I came to the forest where I had felled the trees. I had let in the sunlight in great patches. The ground was

lightly whitened with snow, and the day was crisp and tempting to work. Mechanically I fell to chopping. The work was a relief, for my heart was aching and lonely as when I was a child. It occurred to me to fell trees all day and then at nightfall leave my axe beside the logs and depart.

No one came to these woods now. Especially on this day of expectation no one would come. Perhaps I should hear the great ringing of the bells when the "Boatload of Knowledge" should arrive. This thought pained me so that I hastily redoubled my exertions. Later, when I was pausing to rest, I heard voices approaching. I am accustomed to hear far in the woods.

"I hope we shall run across him," said the voice; "it's rather fine to see him swing an axe. He's the kind of a backwoodsman I expected to find when we first set out from Scotland, lithe, strong, and quick at expedients. I don't know, father, what I should have done without him during those difficult days."

It was William Owen. I reddened at his unexpected praise and began to chop loudly again. I had not meant to listen. Happy William — to be walking thus in affectionate converse with his father after their long separation! I hoped they would come my way. They would see nothing significant in my being here at work in the wood, and the glimpse of their friendliness would warm me for days to come.

They broke into the clearing, William, Robert Owen, then another Owen son, the image of his father, and with them — William Maclure!

My first impulse was to take to my heels. In my bewilderment I turned and gave my tree a mighty stroke at

which it unexpectedly trembled, poised solemnly, then crashed over.

"Bravo, bravo!" shouted the new young Owen.

I was obliged to speak to them. But when I turned I found myself looking straight into the face of Maclure! He was, for a moment, perplexed; then he turned white as he always did in anger. He came over to me.

"Good Lord, Seth! I did not know you were here."

"No," I said; "I am going away. I mean I am leaving the town."

"Are you a member of the Community?"

"No," I faltered.

"Why not?"

I could not answer.

"Why are you going away?"

This was a most terrible ordeal. "I should n't have stayed this long," I cried quickly. "I am sorry, sorry to give you pain. I'll go — I'll go at once."

My voice began to break; I was acting more like a child than a man. The sight of his face filled me with a thousand memories of kindness.

"You are going because I am here! Can you not forget a thing which happened in a moment?"

"Forget, sir?"

"Don't go, lad," he pleaded suddenly. "Great heaven! I've searched everywhere for you — everywhere!"

"Searched for me?" I repeated foolishly.

His face lighted as if under great stress. "Can't you believe, Seth, that I have been very unhappy without you?"

I gasped as this glad truth dawned upon me. I stepped toward him with the instinct to throw both arms about him. But of course I did nothing of the kind.

"Where are you staying?" he asked in the kindest voice in the world.

"In Mr. Pelham's room since the cold weather."

"Well, please remove your belongings at once to the Rapp mansion. That is my home now. You must not be elsewhere. My dear lad," he added in a tone not so steady as it might be, "did it never occur to you what a sevenfold fool you are? I might have lost you — I might have lost you!"

The Owens seeing us in conversation had been discussing the timber, as to whether oak or beech had better first be felled.

Maclure turned with a hand holding fast my arm.

"Mr. Owen," he called, "let me present to you Seth Way, my adopted son. I have unexpectedly found him here. He is a member of your Community."

CHAPTER XIX

THE "BOATLOAD OF KNOWLEDGE"

We walked back together to the dear town. I do not think that there could have been in all the world a happier person than I. I was going back to Harmony! As we came over the vineyard hill and saw the town below — white steeple, dome of hall, familiar groves and roofs — my heart leaped like a lover's.

Robert Owen was talking earnestly to Maclure. Maclure, though walking beside me, was listening to him with a kind of smothered enthusiasm.

"Our town must be *sincere*," said Owen. "In the present state of society men are forced to insincerity — forced to it. Think of the misery which that alone causes! There is no reason here why men, and women, too, should not speak plainly what they think and all they think. That in itself will develop the mind. It will make for the common happiness."

We came into Harmony. The whole town was changed — the "Boatload of Knowledge" was all over the place. Foreign-looking, alert persons walked in every street, for, of course, every one had to see everything forthwith. We met Dr. Troost, from Herzogenbusch, in Holland, the chemist and mineralogist; Thomas Say, the shy, splendid naturalist, who, in spite of his youth, was already called the "Father of American Conchology."

"And this," said Maclure to me, "is Madame Frétageot, who will take full charge of the younger girls' school at the mansion."

I greeted the tall, commanding lady. Beside her were two damsels, in whose presence I stood quite annihilated with shyness — Miss Lucy Sistaire and Miss Virginia Dupalais. They were of a distinguished female elegance which I had never beheld. I thought them very beautiful.

"Ah, here comes my piano," cried Miss Virginia delightedly. "I'm so glad to have it again."

They were carrying it into the mansion. It was a tiny thing. One man alone could have lifted it; but for those days it was a noble instrument, destined to pour forth many a bright strain of music for our delectation.

Now came toiling up the street a great wagon piled high with boxes of every description.

"Ah, my school apparatus!" cried Madame Frétageot. "Behold, Mr. Maclure, what I purchase in Paris at your request. If you do not approve them, I am despair!"

"I am sure I will like them," said Maclure. "Do I not always find your judgment good? Seth, go fetch a hatchet."

"I got a hammer and chisel here," said River Jordan the driver, climbing from the load. "I 'lowed to open them queer boxes myself and see what's in 'em."

Madame Frétageot looked amazed. But Maclure explained in French, "You will find a good deal of personal interest in your doings, out here."

Jordan and I fell to work. We first revealed a huge revolving globe hung in a graduated bronze circle.

"I did not expect it so large," said Maclure, whirling it eagerly.

"But I have pay only the price you name."

"Good, good!" laughed Maclure.

Next we opened a celestial globe. Both globes were

on heavy mahogany stands. I was overjoyed at the prospect of using them.

Then came Madame's own mathematical apparatus — cubes, hemispheres, triangles, and so forth, for she was a famous teacher of mathematics. Then a "piano transpositor," as she called it. Then great quantities of stationery and a number of clocks and a "papriographic" — a curious machine for teaching writing and drawing. And last but not least an "organ of eight cylinders." There on the sidewalk Madame Frétageot at once inserted a cylinder and turned the crank, at which a most charming old French minuet poured forth — a pure magic in those days. Maclure laughed with delight.

"It don't seem like that there's quite lawful," grumbled River Jordan. He was still exploring the boxes with disapproving zeal.

Finally he brought up a clasped Bible.

"Wall," he said, "I'm glad to see ye got the Holy Book among all your ungodly contraptions." He opened it. "Why, it don't read straight! I can't read the thing at all!"

"It's a French Bible, Jordan," I said.

He hastily picked up his hatchet and chisel. "Hit seems to me," he answered, "that when yer takin' Holy Scriptuer ye might take it straight."

Having got the heavier articles in place, Maclure and I went out into the street again.

The introductions were many. We were all full of friendly curiosity, for life was to be very intimate here in our wilderness town. Many of our new arrivals were names to conjure with. There were:

Charles Alexander Lesueur, the naturalist and artist,

fresh from the Pérouse Expedition in the South Seas, and indeed, its sole survivor; Frances Wright, the ardent philanthropist and writer of plays and books, a tall, beautiful young woman, afire with enthusiasm for our System; Captain Donald McDonald, Lord of the Isles and Earl of Skye, an earnest young Scotch Highlander, who had good right to his romantic title; Robert Dale Owen, Owen's eldest son, whom we always called "Robert-Dale" to distinguish him from his father; Phiquepal D'Arusmont, the ingenious mathematician and teacher of music; Cornelius Tiebout, the engraver and printer, whose delicate work was to make Harmony's scientific books famous the world over; Balthasar Obeonesser, a Swiss artist. With these also were a number of French boys, Peter Duclos, Victor Duclos, André Dufour, Charles Falque.

In the great hall we came across Lesueur. He had found my cases of shells and was eagerly bending over them. Looking up he at once recognized me.

"My good gracious me!" he exclaimed in his startling way; "Monsieur Seth, how did you arrive here?"

"I — I was already here," I stammered.

"But, *mon Dieu!* how could you so change like this? In Philadelphia you are a boy! Now, so grand — so — so powerful you are!"

"Have you seen the town?" asked Maclure. "Is n't it an astonishing place out here in the forests?"

"Yes, yes, it is magnificent!" said the Frenchman heartily. "Young man," again turning to me, "I shall paint your portrait — an unusual type. You are dark enough to be a Gascon. Yes, to-morrow you shall sit for me."

I do not know why he wanted my likeness. I am sure I found the sittings very tiresome in spite of Lesueur's brilliant talk as he worked.[1]

Harmony was now plunged into a new excitement. Owen astonished us by doing "something wonderful." After a week's stay he abolished out of hand our organization as a Preliminary Society (the "Halfway House" as he had called it in his speech) and proclaimed a full Community with surrender of private property. Owen, as owner of the land, had hitherto retained a certain control; now he relinquished that control and urged at once the framing of our New Harmony Communistic Constitution.

Then what meetings, what discussions! The steeple bell gathered us every evening and there was never a vacant seat. Constitution after constitution was framed and discarded. Arguments ofttimes grew heated, especially when our hot-headed Earl of Skye took a hand. Owen spoke. Robert-Dale spoke. Maclure spoke. And the ardent Frances Wright. The excitement became painful. Never in one small commonwealth was crowded so much wild expectancy. The world seemed in our hands and we were fashioning the destinies of it.

One young man, who had wandered in from the country to trade at our store, laughingly stabled his horse and took a room at the tavern.

[1] Note by Columbine Way:
I have before me the little water-color portrait of my father — the shy, awakening face of a youth of eighteen with father's quiet smile already dawning upon his lips. The eyes are frank and gentle and startlingly blue. One hardly knows where to place the type, for he seems unmistakably Scotch for all his swarthiness. Lesueur has sketched in the upper left-hand corner an exquisite tiny nautilus shell with outspread rainbow sails — Lesueur's delicate signature. When I die, I shall bequeath this picture to the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences.

"I'm goin' to stay this hyar thing out," he said. "I ain't seen a show like this — not never."

The speeches were brilliant and impassioned; and if some tempers were lost, they were quickly restored with the aid of Robert Owen's gentleness and wisdom. At last, on the 25th of January, 1826, the new Community was organized with Dr. Price as president. Members were then given three days to sign the constitution. Most of them did so, but a few refused on grounds of religious scruple or punctilio. The Earl of Skye was one of these. He, with certain others, formed a sister community — Macluria — at the eastern edge of the town. But this was really in accordance with Owen's theory. The throwing-off of communities from the parent stem was the means by which he expected to overspread the world.

By degrees the excitement subsided, and we settled down to our routine of village life. Then began for me, at the age of eighteen, my first regular school days. What happy, happy days! At six o'clock I was already busy in Neef's Latin class, learning to my amazement that Latin was not a mere drudgery of dead words, but a whetstone knowledge keening up my mind and defining and enriching my speech.

Neef's history class followed. Here the boys were much younger than I, but I held with them, partly to share in the discussions which Neef constantly provoked among us, and partly to observe his marvelous method of questioning. As often as not, Neef would lead his class out of doors and question us as we walked. We talked at ease with him. He encouraged us to confute his statements, our talk drifting toward present politics, physics,

or whatever our path or chance called up. Later, as the weather warmed, Neef would lead us to the river and plunge in with us, himself the finest swimmer of us all.

Of course I spent much time in Maclure's geological laboratory or covering the country with him for geological observation. Often, too, I joined Lesueur's class in their botanical excursions. But being unable to draw the simplest object, I was naturally excluded from Lesueur's charming sketching tours, which used to set forth daily and return in the evening to astonish us with sketches and water-colors of familiar scenes. The town is even yet full of these quaint pictures made by our young folk, who needed no cameras.

I worked hard at chemistry with Dr. Troost, and even teased Dr. Price into teaching me anatomy. I was insatiable in my haste to learn. And every day I devoted at least three hours to Community work. I cut up the wood for the mansion school or ploughed in the fields, according to the season. When needed, I sometimes worked in the woolen mill.

Maclure's school, or the "Educational Society" as we sometimes called it, was sufficiently remarkable. Other schools of the day taught passive children by rote. But Maclure's teachers led them actively from fact to fact until the children made the knowledge for themselves. Instead of learning rules, our children were examining machines, skeletons, and wax models. They delighted in charts and globes and drew local maps for themselves. The older children worked at typesetting, printing, lithographing, and even engraving. Most of all, instead of sitting restlessly on stiff school benches, our children, whenever possible, were abroad with their

teachers among the hills, learning from rocks and growths and living creatures. The specimens thus gathered went to enrich the Community collections. Every child felt himself in some sort a public benefactor.

Such education was all new, so new that some of our very teachers were dubious about it and many parents complained of these "fancy doin's."

CHAPTER XX

CARLO CAPRIOLI

Among our teachers was a certain unaccountable Ramon Quiñones, a Spaniard, who arrived apparently from nowhere with a small company of boys. He was a brilliant linguist and a chemist, suave of manner, romantic-looking as a highway robber, and very proud. He quickly gained the confidence of Maclure and of Owen as well. He always kept his company of boys apart, never letting them play with other Harmony youths, and teaching them all subjects himself. He used the steeple house both as his schoolroom and dormitory. I used to notice these boys marching solemnly through the streets, and I did not like the look in their faces. They seemed furtive, scared. They never romped like our boys. I thought this might be due to their foreign birth and breeding. They were Spanish and Italian boys. One day as I passed the steeple house, I heard Quiñones's voice rasping out invectives, and concluded that the cause lay nearer home. They seemed an incongruous group and out of place in our community. I wondered that Maclure could tolerate them and their teacher in his educational system.

One afternoon in May I was sweeping the upper floor of No. 2 when I thought I heard a dog whining in the hall. I looked about, and at last, opening the door of the attic, saw little Carlo Caprioli, a Quiñones boy, crouching on the stairs and crying his heart out.

"What's the matter, Carlo?" I asked, climbing up beside him.

"No, no, no!" he sobbed, pulling away.

"Don't be afraid," I protested. "Tell me who hurt you."

He could not understand a word I said, but at last looked up into my face. "I want to be — dead!" he faltered out intensely.

"Oh, no, surely not!" I exclaimed, greatly horrified. For never even in my darkest hour had such a wish occurred to me.

"Why?" I questioned; "tell me why you want to be dead."

He could not answer. His childish, tousled head bowing upon his knee looked so forlorn that I put my arm around him on the stair. He began to snuggle to me and slowly thrust out his thin, boyish wrist — blue with bruises.

"Señor Quiñones," he whispered fearfully.

"He shall not do that!" I cried hotly. "That is n't allowed in our schools."

"No tell," pleaded Carlo fearfully. "No — no tell!"

"Indeed I will tell," I answered. "Come, Carlo, come along to Madame Neef. She will fix you up."

It was only after much persuasion that I led him down to the Neef apartments, where Madame Neef bathed and bound up his wrist, while Columbine stood by with her eyes full of tears.

I lost no time in reporting this matter to Mr. Maclure with the result that Quiñones received a severe reprimand, and Carlo, when he passed me on the street, gave me such a frightened glance that I feared I had only made matters worse.

I asked Mr. Maclure to have the child assigned to me

for his Community work, so that afternoon I went to the steeple house to fetch him.

"At present he has his studies," said Quiñones, frowning in royal wrath.

I showed my written order. Suddenly my own wrath flamed. "And Carlo is not to be harmed when he comes back," I asserted.

The boy came with me. We had scarcely passed the corner when he began passionately to kiss my hand.

"Oh, don't, don't!" I cried. "Suppose somebody should see you."

"*Lei mi ha salvato.* But you saved me. I love you, I love you," he exclaimed.

He was so daunted by my reserve that I took his hand again. We reached the woodpile back of the mansion.

"Come, now," I said quietly, "you are to pile the wood here as I split. You would like to help me, would n't you?"

"*Si, si!*" he cried, and flung himself at the work until I feared he would strain his little back.

In all the afternoon Carlo spoke to me only and continually in Italian, I, of course, understanding not one word.

After this I fetched Carlo daily to work with me, and in a fortnight he looked a different boy. He was a handsome, well-bred child with dark, glowing face and a shock of black curls.

He would point out objects to me, naming them in Italian. Finally, to my astonishment, I began to understand him. Thus, bit by bit, I got his story. But he never spoke English to me.

"It was not only Quiñones that made me wish I was

dead," he confided to me one day, standing with his arms full of wood.

"What else, then?"

"Because I have no one in the world. I do not know who is my mother, who is my father, nor where I was born."

"Merciful Heaven! Have you always been with Quiñones?"

"No — I lived with old Lorenza in Napoli, and she was good to me and Giovanni was good to me and Orelia — was my sweetheart."

"Maybe Lorenza is your mother. Put your wood on the pile, Carlo; don't stand with a heavy load."

He obeyed me. "I did think that Lorenza was my mother," he said with unchildish sadness. "But one day this Señor Quiñones came. Then Lorenza told me Quiñones had a message from my people and I must go off with him. She cried and Orelia cried, but I had to go."

"And don't you know anything about your parents?" I pitied the boy from the bottom of my heart.

"No! that is why I am ashamed."

"You must n't be ashamed, Carlo," I said. "Nobody will think ill of you for that."

"Yes, they will. The other boys mock me. But many of them are as bad off as I."

I was for many days anxious over the revelation, both for Carlo's sake and for the sake of the school. Meanwhile I came to talk quite freely Carlo's childish Italian. Later, as it happened, I had cause to be very thankful for this little knowledge of the tongue.

CHAPTER XXI

IN THE YEAR ONE — ERA OF MENTAL FREEDOM

During our first year David-Dale and Richard, Owen's two remaining sons, came to live at Harmony. I have sometimes thought that Owen benefited us more by giving us his four splendid sons than by bestowing the town itself. All four worked ardently for the cause.

Robert-Dale attacked any work, even the most menial, that seemed to need him; William Owen was the business man among them; David-Dale was the scientist, having lately abandoned the career of a painter for that of geologist. David-Dale quickly became my closest companion in the town. Our common study threw us together. David went with Maclure and me on a month-long geological excursion through Kentucky. On our return he fitted up a log cabin in the central block of town for a geological laboratory, and here he and I spent many busy hours.

Richard Owen was at this time too young to show his mettle. He chiefly helped in the social side of our community life. It was he who taught the class in dancing, when the boys were required to bring the fiddler and the girls the candles. He actually invented a dance called the "New Social System," and (alas, to my later undoing) taught me to waltz.

It was a strange, brilliant, stimulating, yet simple, life which we led in our wilderness town. The great drawing-room of the mansion was used as a gathering-place for the older students — a curious, delightful room with its

paintings, shelves of specimens, and curiosities from Bohemia, France, Siberia, the Indies, all of Mr. Maclure's gathering. I used to love to sit there. I was always finding something of new interest. One day Columbine wandered in.

"I was here all morning," she announced, "and now I've come again."

"Do you like the pretty things on the shelves?" I asked.

I took down a tarantula's nest. She listened, very patient, while I explained how the spider constructed her beautiful, white-lined home. Columbine touched the tiny door which opened on its dainty hinges.

"It's all soft white inside," she said, "like a fairy's home. But please, Saint George, I came to look at the pictures in the portfolio."

"But Mr. Lesueur's pictures are not here," I answered.

Lesueur had a collection of exquisite pictures on vellum, which he himself had painted: the unknown animals of New South Wales discovered by the Pérouse Expedition.

"Mr. Lesueur keeps them in his room," I told her.

"I don't mean those ones," said Columbine; "these are prettier."

She opened a portfolio which Maclure had brought from Rome and displayed the bright figures painted on heavy black backgrounds after the manner of Raphael's "Hours." The pictures were named the different signs of the Zodiac, but were not at all the Zodiac figures. They were nude figures sitting impossibly upon lions, or riding a foolish horse-and-man combination. I had always refrained from looking at them.

"Oh, no, Colley," I said hastily, "you don't want to see those."

"Why not? I looked at 'em this whole mornin'," said the child, searching among them. "An' I like this one most — the god and goddess with the blue stars over their heads. They're the Gemmi twins."

I gently closed the portfolio. Columbine looked up.

"Why, Sir George," she said, amazed, "I do believe you think they are wicked."

She was not hurt, only deeply perplexed.

"But," she said, "why would Mr. Maclure put them here?"

My face flushed at the unconscious wrong I had been doing my benefactor.

"My papa," she added, "he showed these to me. He 'splained that those people lived where it is warm all times, so they never had to put on any clothes, an' nobody minded, not a bit. Besides, my papa says that human bodies are prettier than dog-bodies or zebra-bodies, or even little birds."

"The Indians live that way, too, in hot weather," I commented, thinking to close the subject.

"But these are n't Injuns!" she cried, horrified; "they're Greeks!"

I knew the Greeks and Romans as the vague "ancients." I made use of their languages in classification, but I had never thought to ask why. But why, now, had Neef shown these pictures to his little girl? Or why had Maclure, in the first place, set them here? I was guided only by the uncouth modesty of my cabin-folk. I had never seen a statue of any kind. All the knowledge I had gathered seemed to lie in streaks across my mind. Between were black deserts of ignorance.

"I guess we'll look at them, Colley," I ventured.

I took her on my knee and we opened the portfolio on the table before us. I could hear her catch her breath as we turned from picture to picture. Sometimes her little heels kicked against me in delight.

"The prettiest people that God ever made; my papa told me so," she said softly to herself.

"What people?" I asked.

"The Greek people in these pictures. They taught us to make all the pretty things we have."

"But what good are just pretty things!" I objected. "We could get along without them."

"Could you?" asked Colley, amazed. We were looking at the picture of a youth and a maiden, flying with wings of the *Polyphemus* moth. The man held a blazing torch.

"I wonder if that's Cupid and Psyche?" said Columbine.

Just here Mr. Lesueur came in.

"What!" he exclaimed. "Is Mademoiselle Columbine giving you a lecture in mythology?"

"I never know just what she is giving me," I answered.

Lesueur bent quickly over the pictures.

"*Remarquable, exquise!*" he exclaimed. "Maclure thinks these are by Michael Angelo. Of course, that is impossible. But see this." He pointed with his slender finger to the signatures on the margins. "*Romano Mich. Ang. Maestro fecit in Roma.*" "*Caravaggio Mich. Ang. Maestro fecit in Roma.*" "It is quite possible they were made in Angelo's studio and by his various pupils. I never saw copies of them anywhere. Maclure should not leave them open here. They may be priceless."

He sat down beside us, turning from one picture to another.

"Columbine is trying to make me believe that these Greeks knew more than we do," I said, smiling.

"Of course they did!" ejaculated Lesueur. "We have minds that crawl from fact to fact. They had minds of leaping."

"What do you mean, Mr. Lesueur? They did not know geology nor chemistry nor —"

"*Non, Monsieur Naturaliste.* But Plato reasoned out the geology of the Athens plain two thousand years before that science was dreamed of. They had minds of leaping I tell you. Ah, how they knew! They leaped into truth!" He made one of his expressive gestures.

I was too confused to answer. Here was a whole world of knowledge and appreciations which I had never touched.

Lesueur passed on and little Columbine was called to her supper. I sat in the twilight, turning over the precious paintings, realizing for the first time the beauty and sacredness of the human form. I was aware that a certain vague fear in me had been quenched, and that a curious sense of protection had taken its place.

CHAPTER XXII

AN IMPORTANT COMMISSION

In this same mansion room about three months later, Owen accosted me. "Ah, Mr. Way, I was looking for you. I want to ask you to take charge of a class in natural history."

If he had asked me to make a balloon ascension I could not have been more surprised.

"I — why, I could n't do that, Mr. Owen," I stammered.

"Why not?"

"I don't know enough, for one thing. I'm nineteen and I only began my education a few —"

"I was nineteen," interrupted Owen, "when I took charge of the New Lanark Mills."

"But that was you, Mr. Owen," I made bold to say; "I have no such gifts."

"Mr. Maclure says otherwise. He says that on coming here, he found your scientific powers fully developed. He constantly wonders at your depth and accuracy of observation. You attained this for yourself and I like you for it."[1]

I experienced a sort of terror. Would Owen force me

[1] "Such was the effect of Seth Way's private studies, that no one ever saw the infancy of his powers. His elementary knowledge was complete, his acquaintance with classification complete. He was all at once fully prepared for the difficult task of describing American natural history. The numbers of specimens described by Way have probably never been exceeded by any scientist." (Old Harmony manuscript.)

to take up an activity in which I could only come to grief?

"I cannot teach," I declared. "Please, Mr. Owen, do not pain me by asking me to do that."

Owen looked disconcerted, when at the very moment Maclure himself came in.

"Seth," he said sharply, "what is this I hear you saying?"

Owen answered, "I have just desired him to teach in the school, and he refuses in terms I hardly know how to meet."

"Tut, tut," said Maclure. "He'll do it. I am extremely glad you asked him. He'll begin to-morrow."

"But Mr. Maclure —" I began.

"No, Seth, your modesty is a vice. It's the very mischief in you. You'll have to conquer it or I'll conquer it for you."

So I took up my duties as teacher of natural history. To complete my confusion the lovely Miss Sistaire was in my class.

Early the following spring Robert Owen left us. New Harmony was only one of his many "hopes." Other important undertakings now called him to England. The Community moved busily on without him, though in several emergencies we felt ourselves in sore need of his controlling personality and his prescient leadership. But we were full of the belief in success. I could have gone on happily in this Community life from year's end to year's end.

Maclure however had other plans. He called me one day into his study.

"Seth," he said, "I suppose you have noted in the schools our great need of a teacher of music, of singing."

"No," I answered. "I thought we were doing about all that we could expect."

"I do not think so. We ought to have an experienced vocal teacher and leader of chorus. You must go to New York and secure him."

"To New York!" I gasped. "But, Mr. Maclure, I know as much about singing as — as a cat."

"That is neither here not there. Robert-Dale knows a most distinguished musician in New York named Manuel Garcia. They came over in the same ship. Garcia is the head of all music in New York. You are to have a letter to him. You can consult him about the selection."

"But, Mr. Maclure, surely a letter to Mr. Garcia would secure the teacher and not be so expensive for you."

"No, a letter would n't. You know the spirit of this place and you have judgment of men, or will have as you exercise it. I wish you yourself to judge the teacher in regard to character, gentlemanliness, and the like; and if you find the right man, bring him out with you; bring him out. We are too closely thrown together here to leave such an important matter to chance."

I suspected that in all this there lurked some kind purpose, but I dared not speak of it nor thank him.

"Of course, I should enjoy seeing a great city like New York," I said.

"Yes, as a matter of fact, you have never seen a great city. In Philadelphia you kept yourself a recluse. I will give you some letters to friends of mine — not scientists! You'll nose them out for yourself."

"When shall I start?"

"Early next week. You can take the steamboat from Evansville. And, Seth, when you get to Louisville, I want

you to buy some good clothes. You know, of course, you can't go abroad in the Community Costume." [1]

"I had not thought of that," I answered.

"I will give you money for the journey and an ample draft on a New York bank to cover your stay and for your return and that of your teacher. Don't hurry back and don't be over-careful. That is your usual fault. I want you to see the town and to mix with the best people. You must look well and dress well. Remember, if you had been drawing a salary here, you would by now have a good sum of your own."

"But I have n't wanted any salary, Mr. Maclure. I am perfectly content to live according to The System."

"I know you are, Seth," he answered, with his final touch of kindness. "You are the truest Communist of us all. The next time you set out," he added wistfully, "it will be for Europe, and I shall go with you."

[1] Note by Columbine Way:

Dear father! Heaven save the mark! I have that famous "Community Costume," in the old chest — an overgrown sort of boyish roundabout or jacket, with trousers which button *over* it with large buttons high above the waist. It must have made father look like a glorified Simple Simon.

CHAPTER XXIII

AT MANUEL GARCIA'S

One August afternoon I alighted from the coach at Number 1 Courtlandt Street amid the stir and flurry of New York City. Portmanteau in hand I turned into Broadway, where I stopped to look about me as the country-bred are apt to do.

So this was the great Street! The joining of house with house gave me a sense of imprisonment. But what a busy street it was with clattering drays and stages plying up and down, the "Lady Clinton Stage," the "Greenwich Village Stage!" All were marvelously full of people. There were also fine carriages full of silken-gowned ladies, who wore enormous flaring bonnets, a fashion new that year. The sidewalks were alive with people, like a holiday. At the lower end of the street was a glimpse of the bay. Indeed, in every direction I was sensible of the sea. What Westerner is not whose nostrils for the first time sniff the salt!

A man was sawing wood in the street. "Hello, young fella," he called, "lost yer way?"

"No," I answered. "I have n't any way to lose. I'm just looking at your Broadway."

"Well, it's worth goin' a good way to see. Over yonder's the City Hotel, biggest hotel in the world." He straightened up with one knee on his sawbuck.

"Yes, I am going there," I said.

"Guess you ain't been in the city in some time," he remarked.

"No, I've come from Indiana."

"Jee-rusalem, that'll be a long ride! Watch out crossin' Broadway. Them stage-drivers don't think nothin' of runnin' you down. Look at that there coach. Ain't she reg'lar greased lightning!"

I thanked him for his solicitude, crossed safely, and entered the hotel. Its elegance was a little dampening, but the man at the desk was very kind. I took the cheapest room.

"Here, Sam," he called. "Take the gentleman's bag."

Sam started up the broad stairway. It was ridiculous to let the slim boy carry my bag when I could easily have carried the boy and the bag together. I relieved him of it, and he grinned at me all the way up, flight after flight.

My room was in a corner under the roof, and from my windows I could see the city, a world of gabled and dormered roofs, the streets pricked out with rows of Lombardy poplars and the whole circled by tall forests of masts as far as the eye could reach. Beyond spread the bay like a glittering sea. When I reflected how this forest of masts was ever changing, coming from the uttermost parts of the earth and going thither again, I could hardly pause to wash off the dust of the road before hurrying down the stairway and out to explore.

Next morning I at once set about the business of my journey. Garcia's house was not hard to find, for all the houses were numbered — a new custom in the city. A heartless custom it seemed to me, indicating that the townsmen knew each other so little as to be unable to identify their neighbors' homes.

Garcia's door was opened by a dark-eyed, foreign-looking girl. I made no doubt she was the Miss Maria

Garcia of whom Robert-Dale and McDonald of Skye had spoken with such enthusiasm. She afterward became the world-famous singer Malibran; but when I saw her she was a gentle, domestic person, her dimpled arms powdered with flour.

"Yes," she answered, "Signor Garcia is at home."

"If you are Miss Maria Garcia," I said, "Captain McDonald sends his warm regards to you."

What McDonald had really said was: "Give her my love, Seth. By Jove, she's the sweetest creature on earth. She brightened my whole voyage to New York."

"Captain McDonald!" she cried. "You know heem?" Her sweet face glowed at mention of his name.

"Yes, he lives where I live, in New Harmony."

She glanced timidly toward the inner door. "Will he coom here, perhaps?"

"Some day, I hope."

"He was ver' kind to me on the ship. Convey to heem my compliment, my —" Here she stopped with a blush, and added hastily, "Now I gif your letter to my father."

She took my introduction, which Robert-Dale had written, into the inner room and soon returned.

"My father is veree occupied. He will see you in half-hour. You shall wait."

She went away toward the kitchen. As I waited, there came from the inner room the sound of voices, then a piano vigorously if thumpingly played. It paused with a flood of instructive talk, mingled French and Italian, a snatch of melody in Garcia's eloquent tenor, then more piano, with a single word here and there dramatically pronounced.

"*Commençons,*" said Garcia's voice at last.

And there did commence to Garcia's accompaniment a most shocking voice. It was toned like brass and low-pitched as a man's, yet unmistakably it was a woman's. It had in it an expressiveness and passion which seemed to stain my consciousness in a curious, uncomfortable way. Insensitive to music as I was, this singing irritated me. I found myself wishing that I might leave the house and return again for my errand. To my relief the voice ceased. The accompaniment went on for a little and then there broke upon the little stuffy room the most divine sound I ever heard. A voice and more than a voice, high, clear, soaring like a spirit, and filling me with an emotion utterly new. The sheer strength of the voice confused me. It had been trained for large spaces. It poured through the half-closed door and filled the room to throbbing. I believe in these days they call such a voice a dramatic soprano. Dramatic it certainly was and unfearingly high.

Suddenly — "*Non, non, non!*" broke Garcia's irritable French. (Surely, never was there such sacrilege!)

"That is wrong. It must retard, thus." He sang it over for her. "Remember, Eurydice is pleading."

The winged voice began again. I could realize the added tenderness. Eurydice was pleading, indeed! Then unexpectedly the first cow-like voice took up the tale and was answered by the other ("Beauty and the Beast," verily!) They finished together.

At last the door opened and there came out Garcia and two ladies, one stout and somewhat inclined to mustache (without doubt this was she of the dark voice). The other was a tall, slender girl dressed in white; a truly fit embodiment of the pure song I had heard.

"*Per Dios*, you will do it!" said Garcia in Italian to the stout dame. "Take every care of that throat. Your voice is divine this morning in spite of the little cold."

The woman bowed her head with closed lips, saving her voice.

"Cold compresses, thus," said Garcia, with eloquent gestures. "If you do not sing the part to-night I will kill myself. It is written for you and no other."

The young girl waited at respectful distance. What lighted, wonderful eyes she had!

"Signor Garcia," she ventured, "when may I come again?"

Then fell my angel! Her voice was low-pitched. Now in the speaking it sounded rich enough, but it was very low. Unquestionably it was she who had sung like the cow. And had not Garcia given her his back while he loaded the other with compliments?

"Oh, Signora Macleod. Yes," replied Garcia brusquely. "Come to-morrow at three. But practice, my dear. You must heighten the accents, the pauses."

She hurried out. Garcia bowed out most ceremoniously the mustached *diva* and turned to me. I was so bewildered by this whole experience that I could hardly present my request.

"Oh, a teacher," said Garcia, considering. "And for the Far West. I hardly think I can find one. I should be charmed to accommodate Monsieur Owen. But the good teacher — he stay here in New York. At most will he go to Philadelphia. To the wilderness — *non*."

"I wonder what I can do," I said doubtfully. "I must fulfill my commission from Mr. Owen and Mr. Maclure. I cannot go back without a teacher."

Garcia leaned his head to one side and pursed his lips. "*Si, si,*" he said. "Well, I will try. But I fear — I do not think —"

I gave him some description of what the teacher must do with chorus, orchestra, and private vocal teaching. Then I made my way out to the street. I was unaccountably disturbed. I had expected no such difficulty in finding a teacher. Knowing how ignorant of such arts I was, I had looked entirely to Mr. Garcia. Had I taken this expensive journey only to return with an incompetent teacher, or with none? Then unexpectedly the memory of that voice grandeur rushed over me — and with it rose the picture of the coarse-looking *diva*, its owner, like a travesty.

"But what is it to me how she looked?" I said almost aloud. Yet I did care. Some sacred thing in me had been betrayed, had been tricked into coming forth and then — outraged. I walked down Broadway past the New York Athenæum where the poet Bryant published his "Evening Post," past Trinity Churchyard with its great rows of shady trees in front known as "The Mall," to Bowling Green, place of elegant homes, and thence to the Battery, where I sat the rest of the morning under the willows by the beach, watching the great sailing ships arriving and departing.

CHAPTER XXIV

MR. BACKWOODSLEY SEES NEW YORK

I WAS thankful when afternoon came and I could present my letter of introduction to Mr. Maclure's friends, the Rogers. I found the house on Bowling Green, a red brick with marble stoop and a high-arched doorway, where I rang the bell. A maid ushered me into the drawing-room. Here I occasioned quite a flutter of two young females, who seemed to think my coming most inopportune.

"Oh, dear!" they exclaimed. "Pray excuse us, sir. How perfectly dreadful of us." And they fled, leaving behind them some pretty filmy work and a sewing-basket. After they had disappeared I noted a tall youth entering at the far, shadowy end of the salon and awkwardly taking a chair. It did not add to my composure when I perceived that the youth was myself in a huge mirror. Also I could still hear the young ladies giggling softly in the hall.

Van Dusen Roger came breezily in.

"Why, howdy do, Mr. Way. We've been expecting you for a week. Father is out now, but he will be back before dinner. Why did n't you turn up before?"

"I only arrived yesterday. But did you expect me?"

"Well, you see your father wrote my old man about you. They're great friends. Father meddles a little with dried toads and stones and those sort of things, you know. Perfectly harmless, of course, and it amuses him."

It took me some moments to comprehend that the young man was referring to geology.

"In our town we are not accustomed to call geology an amusement," I said stiffly.

"Say, now, that's too bad of me. Maybe it's your business."

"It's Mr. Maclure's business," I answered.

"Well, now, I am sorry. Say, girls!" he called. "You may as well come back. He's already seen you!"

Thus admonished, the girls fluttered in again. Van Dusen introduced them. Milly, the older, a buxom, tall creature, and Amy, slight and soft-voiced.

"We just never sit down here in our morning gowns. We should have changed hours ago," said Amy.

"Howdy do, Mr. Way," said Milly, bowing. She turned at once to her brother. "What do you think, Van, — the Crowells have moved out beyond Bleeker Street. Don't you think that's ridiculous?"

"Why, yes, what possessed them? Property way out there'll never be worth anything."

"I guess you're not thinking of property, Van."

"Well, anyway, Sally's too nice a girl to live off there in the cornfields."

"I thought you'd be mad over Sally. Say, Van, I met Mr. Carrol, walking in Battery Park, and —"

Somehow the conversation appeared to leave me out completely. I was wondering how I might find some excuse to withdraw.

"Mr. Way," said a soft voice at my elbow, "I heard you speaking of the science of geology just now."

"Your brother was speaking of it," I said.

"I love it. I often and often look over father's specimens."

"I've no doubt they are very rare ones."

"Oh, of course, Mr. Way, not what *you're* used to, I'm *sure*. We all hear so much of the intellectual *brilliance* of your town."

"It's the finest town in the West," I responded, American-wise.

When I dared to steal a glance in Miss Amy's direction I thought her very pretty. She had an unusually high forehead and downcast eyes. Two charming little curls hung at her temples, and when she spoke, the movement of her rosebud lips stirred me with unexpected delight. I felt reassured.

Van Dusen turned to me. "Mr. Way, suppose we go for a stroll together and see the town. We'll get back here in time for dinner. Oh, yes, girls; I forgot the theater. All right; we'll make a party of it."

Van Dusen and I spent a lively afternoon about town. It was dark when we returned for the evening meal. The two girls were dressed for the theater, Miss Milly in a fashion which made me rather ashamed to look at her; but Miss Amy wore a white frock and kerchief and was the picture of modesty. The elder Mr. Roger welcomed me warmly.

Van Dusen was full of our adventures. "What d' ye think, girls!" he said as we sat at table. "I took this innocent, this country youth, to Scudder's Museum. But he said he'd seen all those stuffed monkeys and snakes in their native *habitat* — was n't that the word?"

"But, Mr. Roger, I hope I was not so rude as that."

"Of course not; but you showed how bored you were. There was that *Pygarg* from Russia — wonderful monster. But he did n't crack a smile at it."

"I should think not," put in the kindly, dignified father

of the family. "A young gentleman who has studied the marvels of early zoölogy with Maclure would hardly be interested in mere foreign curiosities."

"Well, anyway, he had something else up his sleeve all the while."

"Indeed, I never thought of such a thing," I protested.

But Van rattled on.

"I took him to Fraunces Tavern, but he wouldn't drink a drop — said it was n't *comme il faut* in Harmony Town."

Milly laughed merrily, showing her pretty teeth.

"Then I took him to Jake Taylor's shooting-gallery and, by crick! he brought up the duck every time! You know you get a prize and have nothing to pay when you make six bull's-eyes running. Jake got uneasy. 'Give him more distance,' says he. 'Let him shoot through the door from the curbstone.' The dandies began to crowd in from Broadway, and I began to strut around and refer to 'my friend from Indiana.' Then Way remarked quite casually to Jake, 'Perhaps you'd better put out the lights and set a candle at the far end of the gallery. That's more the way we shoot in the West,' says he. So Jake did it. We lighted the candle and, by Jove! Way shot it out. Jake lit it over and over again; but Way never missed it. Think of the convenience! You take your candle up to your bedroom, get into bed, say your prayers, poke your nose out of the bedcovers, and — bang! — there you are, asleep in the dark!"

I had to join in the general laughter. "When you have to shoot straight or go hungry, you can't help learning," I remarked.

"Go hungry!" cried Miss Amy. Her sympathy somehow unloosed my tongue.

"You see, we boys have to stalk deer at night. We go into the woods with torches. Some of us go ahead while the others hold the flares. When the deer or bars" (why did I slip like that?) "stare out of the thicket, their eyes glint in the torchlight. We have to shoot at the glint, and without any gallery, either, to gauge the distance by. We practice with a candle so as to learn the night shooting."

This was a large speech for me before company. I was much flushed when I finished it. Miss Amy looked deeply interested. "I wish it were the proper thing for females to go to the shooting-gallery," she said.

There was often a shadow of wistfulness upon the girl and later I learned the cause.

When dinner was over we went to the Park Theater opposite City Hall. Edwin Forrest was playing "Hamlet." I, who had wept and laughed at the dramatics of our Thespian Society in Harmony, had supposed that nothing could be more wonderful. But this Forrest in the early flood of his dramatic powers was another matter. He snatched me quite away from my present world. I came to between acts and chatted gayly and ate home-made candy with the young ladies. I could not see that they enjoyed the play. Miss Milly kept yawning behind her fan, and even Miss Amy, who had appeared interested during the performance, remarked as we were going home that the sorrowful ending disappointed her.

"Pooh!" said Van Dusen, "Hamlet always ends like that."

"But how should I know?" said the gentle Amy. "I hope, Van, you don't think I read Shakespeare, no modest female could do that."

It was charmingly innocent as she said it. And, moreover, the moonlight was shining full upon her face.

Van Dusen insisted on accompanying me back to my hotel. He was always friendly, but I feared that certain absences of his between acts had added somewhat unduly to his cordiality.

"Look here, Way," he said, taking my arm, "I think I ought to tell you that Miss Amy is n't my own sister."

"Indeed," I answered, puzzled.

"Nope; she's quite penniless, poor girl. Her father and mother — cousins of ours, you know — died of yellow fever last year — the big plague — and of course we took her in."

I said nothing, for it seemed most indelicate that he should discuss the young lady in this fashion.

"Nice girl, Amy. Deuced nice girl — a bit over-anxious to do well for herself. But you can't blame her for that, now, can you?"

"I think we'd better talk of something else," I said.

"Yes, yes. No offense," was his half-drunken apology. "I saw you liked her and I thought I'd just tell you."

I mounted my stairways quite hot and flustered. What business had the youth, even in his cups, to speak so disrespectfully of that fair young girl!

CHAPTER XXV

THE GREAT BALL

My second talk with Garcia both surprised and troubled me.

"I have engage your teacher, Signor Way," he greeted me. "*Mon Dieu*, it iss for you a most ree-markable luck. A yong gentilman I haf found. He will go. He *long* to go to the West. And he haf a voice. *Ma foi*, what a voice!" He touched his lips with his meeting finger tips, then waved them in air.

"And when shall I meet him?"

Garcia's countenance fell.

"Ah, there iss *la difficolta*. This yong man, he must set in order hees affaires. He have gone away — well, to sell estate — what you call it. He not come back before — two weeks."

"But I'll be leaving New York by that time," I said. "Can I not go somewhere to him?"

Garcia put his head to one side. "*Non*," he said finally. "*Non. Impossible*. But what matter?" He patted my shoulder. "You will see him — two weeks. And chorus he can lead, and harmony and contra-bass he can teach. Ah, *Madre di Dios*, do I not know what Signor Owen require?"

I did not like this arrangement. Mr. Maclure had particularly required that I exercise my judgment in the matter, however poor that might be. I determined to search elsewhere so as to be forearmed in case Garcia's

client should in any way prove undesirable. In this quest Miss Amy was my helper. She took me to her guitar teacher, a fattish, snuff-taking man.

He asserted that no musician who could make a living in New York would want to leave it for the West. "New York is the only place for music in America," he said. "Garcia? What? Has Garcia promised you a teacher? Garcia knows all the musicians. You can count yourself lucky. You can rely upon Garcia."

The Park Theater manager said the same. But theater offices seemed pretty rough places to take a lovely female like Miss Amy. And I was afraid I should tire her.

"Could n't we sit awhile and rest in Battery Park?" I asked, as we came back to the Bowling Green.

She blushed and as usual looked very pretty.

"Van would tease me," she said.

"Van shan't know," I replied gallantly.

We sat a long while silent under the willows, watching the great wings of the ships. The breeze whipped her cheeks to the pink of a shell. Her little temple curls strayed charmingly from her poke bonnet and around her face.

"Oh, dear!" she said. "If this wind keeps up, I shall be a perfect fright." She hastily tucked the curls in.

"Don't," I whispered, putting out my hand with a sudden most curious tenderness. My hand encountered hers and the touch so startled me that I sprang up like a guilty boy.

"Don't you think we ought to be going?" I stammered.

She rose calmly and took my arm. Apparently she had not noticed my embarrassment.

"Those ships," she said, as we started toward Broad-

way; "they always make me think of dear father. At one time he owned two that went to South America. But that's all past," she sighed.

"I knew of that," I said gently. Never in my life had I known the delicious pleasure of comforting any one. I longed to lay my hand over the little lace-mitted fingers upon my arm. But, of course, I did no such thing.

She said: "If only my mother had been spared — There's nothing like parents, is there, Mr. Way?"

"No," I agreed. Then I brought myself up short. "I ought not to say that, Miss Amy. To me Mr. Maclure is as true a father as could be found in all the world."

"Mr. Maclure is very kind to you, is n't he?"

"I can never tell you how kind," I answered with feelning. My gratitude to Maclure welled up, with pity for her whose guardians were so different from my own.

"That's lovely," she responded, "when he's so well-fixed."

"So *what?*" I gasped.

But she laughed quickly. "What did I say? I mean well-informed, of course. How could I have so misspoken?"

As we parted at her door she repeated the correction. I was easily convinced. It did not stand to reason that so lovely a creature could be of sordid mind. And even if such a mind had been a bit tainted, would it not be entirely the fault of the worldly system under which the poor girl lived? How right was Mr. Owen to remove worry and the ugly temptations! Set in our Harmony village how this young soul would bloom with innocence and joy! So keenly did I picture this that as I walked to my hotel I came near being run down by that very

Albany Stage against which the wood-splitter had warned me.

I dropped in at Peabody's bookstore. Here, by good fortune, I met a member of the firm who was just going to Paris to buy books. I was thus able to order a long list of books which I had been needing for the past two years, and to purchase on the spot two works by Cuvier and La Place's book on zoölogy. I paid cash for them all as the firm was perfectly trustworthy and the forwarding of money was not an easy matter in those days.

For some time Van Dusen Roger had been filling my ears with a "great ball" which was soon to be given at the City Hotel where I was still staying. I was, of course, to escort Miss Amy.

"Now, Way," said Van Dusen one morning, "I suppose you're all — all fixed for this affair."

"In what way 'fixed'?"

"Well — clothes."

"Why, of course, Roger, this suit is perfectly new."

"But where on this terrestrial ball did it come from? I've been wondering that ever since you put in an appearance."

"I got it in Louisville," I protested; "from the best shop."

"Oh, Way, what a silly ass you are! Louisville! You come along with me quick."

He hurried me forthwith to the most fashionable tailor on Broadway, where he selected materials, and where a few days later I was fitted with a blue broadcloth swallow-tail coat with astonishing silver buttons, breeches of brown satin, white silk stockings, and dancing-pumps.

I felt very like the stuffed monkey in Scudder's Museum. But Van Dusen slapped me on the back, delighted.

"By Jove, Way, I had no idea you were so good-looking. You'll be cutting us all out!"

The price of this outfit was quite a shock, but I paid and said nothing. Afterward, on the night of the ball, I was duly thankful for the suit and every other aid which might make me a less inappropriate escort for Miss Amy. She herself was the loveliest creature I ever beheld — a figure of pink gauze, light as insect wings, hovering, perfumed, unreal. I hardly dared to sit beside her in the carriage. She seemed radiant with an exquisite life such as I had never dreamed of. We bowled along in the moonlight. Broadway was crowded with such carriages, all open and carrying lovely freight, friends merrily chatting across from one to another. All of a sudden, in the gay street, my forest shyness seized me.

"Miss Amy," I stammered in a panic, "I don't know why I told you I could dance. I cannot. I have tried, mostly with little Columbine, and — and she had always to tell me the figures."

"Laws!" laughed Miss Amy. "I should think a man that could name all the shells in the rivers could remember the figures in a dance."

"Only fossil shells," I corrected her.

"They're worse yet — all Latin things. Besides," she said, leaning toward me so that I became rather breathless, "cannot I tell you the figures as well as Columbine, whoever she may be?"

Somehow the way she said it caused me to realize that she intensely wished me to dance. And with this my shyness vanished as suddenly as it had come.

"Of course I'll dance with you," I said, glowing. I might have added, "Or walk on my hands if you wish it."

We reached the hotel. Above us the music came floating out from tall, lighted windows. Crowds of fluttering ladies and inconspicuous men were surging in. At the head of the stairs Miss Amy left me and I waited for her, lonely in the midst of the rainbow tide. At length she reappeared like a flower unfolded. I realized that in the carriage she must have been wrapped in something or other.

"Come, come along," she said, laughing; "you can't just stand here all the evening, you know."

The ballroom was as light as day — candles everywhere, crystal pendants dangling from great chandeliers and glittering like a thousand dews. All was a confusion of moving forms and music. Then the music and dancing stopped. Presently a new measure sounded.

"It's the cotillion," said Amy, and glowing with excitement, I stepped with her into the midst.

"Why did you tell me you could n't dance?" she whispered, a moment later as I passed her in full swing.

"I thought —" I answered back. But she was already far down the line.

Then followed other cotillions, quadrilles, waltzes. I danced them all, proud of my sudden access of skill. I danced with Miss Milly and several other young ladies to whom they introduced me. Between dances we visited the great punchbowls. I did n't like the stuff. Its odor reminded me of what Bill Swently used to give me and of his brutal guffaws when he would see me confused.

Later we sauntered to one of the remote rooms and sat down by a great cool window.

"Oh, ain't it warm!" breathed Miss Amy.

I fanned industriously. "But you are prettier when your cheeks are so — so rosy," I told her.

I marveled at the crescendo of her perfection.

"Oh, Mr. Way," she exclaimed, "you have broken my fan!"

I had, indeed. It was a filmy thing of lace and sandalwood.

"I am so sorry," I cried, gazing ruefully at the dainty wreck.

"Gracious, that's nothing."

"You'll let me give you another before I go back home," I pleaded. We were very young. I, at least, younger than I had ever been in my life.

"Mr. Way," she said, and her voice changed softly, "it just does not seem possible that — you are going away — well, out of our lives —so soon."

"I hope I won't do that," I said in the same low voice.

"Yes, you will. It's only we women who remember. A few weeks' absence, and a man forgets a new-made friendship."

"I won't forget," I protested.

My hand was resting beside hers on the bench, and now I was aware that her own was close to it. My hand slipped over hers and so remained. We sat thus for a while in silent companionship.

"You would n't believe that anybody could be lonely in our great big house," she said at last, "with so much company and gay doings."

Then I looked into her face and saw her gray maiden eyes shining as if with tears. Could my coming or going mean so much to this angelic creature?

"Amy!" I whispered in amazement.

The sweet power of sheltering, of giving joy, of causing sorrow, surprised me like a sudden bell. And in that wonderful surprise I leaned still nearer to her — and — kissed her.

Yes, I did that! I shall never forget the shock of her soft, perfumed cheek upon my lips, nor how the shock sobered me.

"La, Mr. Way!" she said, with a nervous little laugh.

It was a false laugh. It told me something that I could not quite make out. I sprang up from the sofa, flustered, confused.

"Miss Amy," I stammered, "I don't know how I could have done such a thing!" (But, no, that was the worst possible thing to say.)

"Forgive me!" I tried again. "You looked so pretty, and — But, good gracious, of course that is no excuse!"

"I suppose you always kiss a girl if she looks pretty," she murmured. Her head was bowed so low that I could not see her face.

"Oh — no — really, Miss Amy —!"

Here, to complete my discomfiture, Miss Milly appeared in the doorway. I muttered an excuse about fetching refreshments and fled.

I returned, as it happened, by another door. The two girls were already eating ice-cream and giggling with their heads together.

"No, Amy Roger!" I overheard Milly exclaim, in her heavy voice; "he did n't! Not really! Well, I give in. Whatever did you do?"

Amy shook her head in demure triumph. "Not a thing," she said.

I turned away in boiling wrath and made off again to the farthest room I could find. My feelings toward Miss Amy had all along been as vague as could be. Yet to my nineteen years they had been very sacred and wonderful. And all the while the girl had been making game of me!

I stalked up and down the deserted corridor in impotent rage. I found myself still holding in my hand the little tray of refreshments. I set it wrathfully upon the nearest chair and spilled the cakes abroad.

But my anger against the girl quickly shamed itself into anger against myself. I — the scientist, the would-be scholar — I had kissed a girl I had not meant to kiss, and all because she had planned it. I had been making love for her amusement like a puppet on a string!

Oh, I was green! — green! Well, it was time for me to go back home where greenhorns belonged! How fine and full of dignity showed my Harmony people beside these puzzling new friends. I would go at once. No, the coach would not leave until the day after. I would hunt up the Garcia teacher and compel him to go with me.

This determination somewhat calmed me. Then I heard the people going home and realized that, willy-nilly, I must return to my damsel.

Miss Amy was startled at my gravity and inclined to be innocent and offended. But for this I cared not a whit. It was in the carriage that she suddenly softened again. "Mr. Way," she said, "I believe you are thinking something that you misunderstand."

"I am not misunderstanding anything now," I replied with dignity.

"Perhaps not," she said in a low voice. "But you

may misunderstand *me*. Everybody thinks I am light and thoughtless. And Milly, she says things — and I have to answer her. But — but —" Her head was down again and her voice trembling. It was a very sweet, sincere-sounding voice.

"The fault was all mine, all mine," I began.

But perhaps it was just as well for me that at this point our carriage arrived at the Bowling Green door.

When I came back to the hotel I learned that Van Dusen was still there. I went to him at once. He was fortunately sober and I carried him off to my room.

"Going home!" he cried. "What for? Have you and Amy had a tiff?"

"No — not exactly. But — well, I think I'll go."

"You simpleton," he said, laughing. "What's all your fuss, anyway! You probably kissed her as she meant you too."

"I will not have the young lady blamed in any way," I said staunchly.

"Why? Did Amy mind?"

"Mind! How dare you, Mr. Roger!"

"Well, she's never minded before. We all knew you'd do it before the dance was out. But, Heavens, what difference does it make, anyway! Amy's the sweetest girl in the world; but really, Way, she's a desperate flirt."

"You don't understand her," I said, waxing loyal all in a moment. "Miss Amy seems light-hearted, gay, and all that. But at heart she is lonely, lonely!"

Roger slapped me on both shoulders and exploded with laughter.

"Oh, Way, Way, you'll be the death of me! Think it

over, sonny. Amy — lonely! Oh, but that's too good! She and I are the best chums in the world. Sometimes I'm half in love with her myself. But she can't help flirting, even with me. Now, let's have a drink."

I was too shocked for answer. And Van Dusen went off whistling and laughing down the corridor while I stood there helpless, like a numbskull whose world has been stood on its head.

Next day I went twice to Garcia and finally ascertained to my great relief that my music-master had completed "hees affaires" and that he would meet me the following morning at the coach office in Number 1 Courtlandt Street.

"But the time iss too short. You will not then have hear heem sing," ventured Garcia.

"Never mind that, Mr. Garcia. You guarantee that he is a fine singer and suitable for our needs in New Harmony. I can trust you. You know best."

"Ah, *Dios*, do I not!" he answered delightedly.

CHAPTER XXVI

OUT OF THE FRYING-PAN

In the gray dawn of the September morning the "Pioneer" stage-coach stood ready at Number 1 Courtlandt Street. The horses stamped impatiently, for they were four spirited steeds. Now they shuddered their skins to shake off the morning mist, jingling thus their bright harness.

The coach was egg-shaped, and slung lightly upon two leather bands or thorough-braces, which were supposed to afford an easy, rocking motion. Low in front was the driver's seat. Behind was the curtained rumble for the baggage. The coach was very open. Within I could see the new patented spring seats. It was very grand, indeed.

The street was yet empty and still. Only a few sleepy boys were sweeping the doorways of the shops. The heavy drays were just beginning their clatter on Broadway. Our one lady passenger was huddled in the coach office. The men were outside chatting and looking at the horses. There were two merchants returning to the West, and a Southern planter, erect, talkative, with white mustache and goatee.

"Fine animals, fine animals!" he said to the company in general. "But, Lord, not the steeds o' Kentucky. Now I have on my Virginia plantation a litte ma'eh —" In the midst of this vaunting he caught sight of me. I was nervously watching the street, pacing often to the corner for a better view along Broadway.

"My deah suh," he remarked, "you seem impatient as a bridegroom."

"I'm expecting a traveling companion," I said. "I can't start without him."

"Youah time is almost spent," he said consolingly.

Just then I caught sight of Mr. Garcia himself. He was walking leisurely along and at his side, to my puzzlement, walked a tall young female. I recognized her as the young lady whom I had heard sing so atrociously at his rooms.

I hurried to meet him. "Mr. Garcia!" I exclaimed. "The teacher? What has become of him?"

Garcia made an elaborate bow. "Monsieur Way have misunderstand. *This* is the *maestra* I engage for you. Let me introduce" — with another bow — "Mademoiselle Macleod."

The young girl, rather confidently, I thought, bowed to me; but I was too aghast to return her greeting.

"Mr. Garcia," I said desperately, "what does this mean? Surely you knew perfectly well I thought you had secured a man for me. You told me —"

"But, Monsieur, how could you take Mademoiselle Macleod for a man? I appeal to *les passagères*, is that not a mistake — inexcusable?"

He appealed to them, indeed. They were all about us, all of them smiling as the situation dawned. It dawned upon me too — the impossibility of the long journey with a young lady, the greater impossibility of arrival at Harmony with her. Had I escaped Miss Amy for this? And had I failed in the whole object of my visit?

"Mr. Garcia," I said, raising my voice, "this may be all very funny for you — I cannot imagine why you

wished to trick me. I asked you for a master, a choral leader. You perfectly understood. Now I can only say that I cannot accept the young lady. I am sorry you have subjected her to such embarrassment."

A trill of laughter went round the crowd. Did I say the street was empty? It certainly was not. There seemed more than four directions for people to arrive from. Garcia took a wheedling tone. He shook his finger sidewise in front of my face.

"Ah, ze prejudeece. In your Harmonie zey haf not ze prejudeece. Zey shake it off — zhus. But you — you haf prejudeece against woman. Why, because she is woman, shall she not know Art!"

"She may know Art or not. It makes no difference. Mr. Maclure commissioned me to bring a man and I shall do so."

Just here memory struck cold. I had paid my hotel bill last night. What with books and broadcloth and a gift for Columbine, I found I was far too low in funds to remain longer in New York. How, then, could I linger to secure my teacher? Also I dreaded Miss Amy? But in spite of all, I stood my ground.

Upon this came a great clatter and a wagon dashed up; that is, the horse-o'-bones dashed. The wagon itself was burdened with a huge harp in its box, a stout, foreign-looking trunk, and a portmanteau.

"Ze baggage of ze *maestra*," announced Garcia.

"Looky here," put in the coach-driver who had come out of the tavern, wiping his mouth. "D'ye think I kin wait all day? Quit yer quarrel an' come along."

"Aw, take her," bawled the Westerner. "What air ye made of to balk at a purty young thing like that?"

"Say," advised another, "she'll make ye a great teacher. She could teach me!"

Garcia became serious. He seemed strangely eager to get rid of the young lady. "Monsieur Way, it iss ze truth. *Madre di Dios* — ze truth. Mademoiselle Macleod is *musicienne rémarquable*. Her voice! *Ma foi!* It is like an angel of paradise. I have taught her. I pronounce it so. If she stay with me, I will to give her quick a place in my opera next to my daughter Maria. But she is" — he hesitated — "*invalide* — ill. She must go to ze West."

"Mr. Garcia," I said firmly, "I have heard her sing. I do not like her voice."

The girl's face went crimson; and I realized that she understood English. As for Garcia, he went into a sort of fit. His eyes rolled and his voice rang like a conch.

"*Carramba!*" he cried, "*Sangre!* You — you ignorant — you *paysan* — you clod-hoop! What do you know of a voice. I — I" — tapping himself on the chest — "*I* say it is good. Garcia have a reputation to keep, and I say so — to everybody — to the world!"

My own temper caught fire at his. Anger was not a usual battle with me. Before I knew it I was impotently angry and so held for many a day.

"By Heaven, I'll do as I choose," I cried. "And I won't take her!"

I turned, meaning to fetch my portmanteau from the coach, when suddenly the girl herself spoke. Her voice, whatever I may have said of it, came like a deep *violone* upon our raucous tongues.

"Mr. Way, I beg you — I beg you to listen!" She made a small, appealing gesture and I could not but wait for her. "I did not approve this secret action. Signor

Garcia insisted upon it. He means it fairly. But I knew it would be best to put the matter to you frankly — to show myself and ask if I would not do. And honestly, Mr. Way, I know I can perform the duties. Indeed — indeed, I can, even if you do not like — the *timbre* of my voice." (She blushed painfully, and I wished with all my heart I had said nothing about it.) "My skill is a true skill. My grandfather in Rome taught me since I was a tiny girl, and Signor Garcia has taught me. I have always been with my grandfather in his chorus work. I never led a chorus, but I can. Even a small orchestra — I am well enough acquainted with the scores to lead that too."

Her wide gray eyes fixed themselves upon me. But Amy Roger also had gray eyes.

"My dear young lady," I said coldly, "does not at least the impropriety of our going together appeal to you? The journey is a thousand miles."

"Yes," she said; "yes." And her face startled me with its change. Fear alighted there and quivered visibly.

"Oh, Mr. Way," she said in a low tone, "I need to go. I desperately need to go. If you do not take me, I shall not know where to turn."

Here was a condition which ought to have made me doubly unwilling. But her voice broke eloquently and her eyes filled with troubled tears.

"Gad, man," exclaimed the Southerner, "when lovely woman pleads!"

I did not know I had capitulated until after the event. I said something half coherent and went off to help hoist the bulky harp upon the rumble.

Garcia kissed her good-bye, first on one cheek, then

on the other, in abominable fashion. I heard him say insolently, "*Mon enfant*, I have not understood the human race. You — you alone should have pleaded and all would have been well."

Then the Southerner with elaborate kindness handed my protégée into the coach. I followed. The horn merrily sounded, and we clattered down Courtlandt Street to the ferry, which was to take us — coach, horses, and all — across the Hudson River.

CHAPTER XXVII

IN THE "PIONEER" COACH

I SAT in the front corner seat riding backward, while my new companion sat in the farthest rear seat. Between us in the middle were the two Ohio men. The elaborate Southerner sat beside her, gazing at her with open admiration. Everybody in the coach had me, and had her, in the corner of his eye. The steam ferry moved slowly, smoothly, across the noble stream which, upon my arrival, had afforded me such pleasure. It gave me no pleasure now.

"Have you, my deah young lady," asked the Southerner, — "have you in youah own land a moh beautiful sheet of watah? We ah justly proud of ouah Hudson."

I could see her hand trembling as it rested on the window ledge. Her face still bore a look of scared relief; but she managed to look out with interest.

"It is beautiful. But is there not a tide? It seems an estuary rather than a river."

"Estuary is a charmin' wo'd, ma'am. I am glad to heah you apply it."

The man had not understood her distinction, so she let it pass. The boat landed at Paulus Hook and the coach rumbled out. We had commenced our journey. For the most of the day she kept perfectly still (I did not at the time realize my blessings). She seemed as one too lately released from anxiety to look easily upon her surroundings.

I could not but puzzle over her as she sat thoughtful and aloof, wrapped in her soft shawl, and with a veil draped over her poke bonnet, ready, I thought, to lower at need. Her name was ridiculously Scotch, yet she herself seemed almost French or Italian. Her gray eyes did not indicate this nor did her hair, which was not dark, what I could see of it under her bonnet. But in the erectness of her bearing she was foreign, and she had a certain suavity of shoulder and form unlike our American maidens. When she spoke, her words were separated too crisply and her gestures too ready. She was mysterious and not frank. I was somehow less sorry for her now. I thoroughly dreaded my arriving in Harmony with this freight. But I was to go through much before that arrival should be effected. The post-road became rougher as the day advanced. We traversed a level country, sometimes cleared, sometimes deep oak forest. Once we had a slight breakdown, but after mending a thorough-brace we went on.

It was at Princeton that my companion began to ask questions: What was this large Academy? Whence came the youths who filled it? What was its curriculum? "And no doubt you have universities like our Oxford and Cambridge. Have I not heard of one called 'Harvard'?"

How in the world, being French, did she manage to claim Oxford and Cambridge!

"Madam," responded the Southerner, "we have the University of Virginia, the noblest seat of learning in America. Gad, madam, theh you have a breedah of men!"

"Like Sparta," she said promptly, and I thought, with a conscious toss.

"My deah young lady, I see you know the classics.

But I should call Charlottesville, *Athens* — the Athens of America."

Here we passed by some fields of ripe corn. She leaned quite out from the carriage. "What is that interesting crop?" she asked in her well-heard voice. "I've never seen that before."

"Ain't never seen corn?" wondered the Ohioan.

"Maize or Indian corn, ma'am," from the Southerner.

"Oh, I am glad to see that! All Europe envies you of America your splendid maize. We have no such fat eating for our working-man."

"More'n workmen eat it," said the Ohioan. "But fur that matter, we're all workmen here, ain't we?" He looked around.

"That was nobly said. Oh," — she lifted her hands in a quick clasp, — "you cannot understand — you who have always known freedom — what it means to me to penetrate into the heart of this great democracy."

It seemed to me that she was piercing more hearts than the symbolic one of the democracy. At the next stage, the Ohioan leaped out and ran back a long distance to fetch for her a stalk of corn. She held it in her hands with greatest interest, commenting on the size of the ear, the grain, the colored silk, the character of the stalk, and its relation to cane or bamboo. I had never met a girl whose thoughts ran in such curious channels. All this was not quite seemly conduct for the female mind. Certainly in result it was unseemly, for it concentrated upon her the attention of the whole coachful.

"Speaking of ouah democracy, ma'am," said the Southerner, "do you realize what a vast country this is? It stretches from the pine to the palm."

"And in which part do you live, sir?"

"Ah, my deah young lady, no American would ask that. We ah known, we ah recognized — we Virginians. I live in Culpeper County, Virginia, madam."

"Tell me of your life there," she said eagerly. "Even within your democracy the different regions must breed different modes of life. Climate alone would compel that."

It was positively uncanny the way this girl thought in generalizations. But the Southerner still was charmed.

"We *ah* different, ma'am," he announced. "Different an' moh fortunate than all the rest. Virginia is the garden-spot, the Eden, the flower of this happy realm."

Here the old gentleman launched upon a description of his home land. As he spoke he grew so sincere and fine that he put every one of us in a glow. We saw the kind, wide homes, the never-failing hospitality to strangers, the women, lovely, soft-voiced, the brave, upstanding men, and all the unhurried gentleness of their days. We saw the magnolia avenues in stately bloom, the broad acres, the cotton-fields white to the harvest, and the negroes singing in the fields.

I saw the girl's eyes deepen with delight. When he had finished, she was as quiet as the rest of us.

"I hope I shall see that country!" she breathed.

"You must come to visit us, ma'am. My charmin' wife will welcome you."

"And these negroes you speak of. Are they the real blacks?"

"Ratheh so, ma'am," and his mustaches smiled.

"Who are they? Where do they come from?"

"Most of 'em bawn on the place. I neveh owned but two Congo niggahs, they're too wild."

Her eyes had a trick of widening suddenly and shining very bright.

"Owned!" she exclaimed. "Surely you don't mean — slaves!"

"Why, yes, ma'am," amusedly. "Vi'ginia has been generally considered a slave State."

"*Slave* State! But I thought this land was *free* — the one free republic of the world!"

It seems incredible that she could have come to this country knowing thus little of our institutions. But in those days foreign travelers did not consider us very worth knowing.

"It *is* free, ma'am. You do not undehstand. Have you eveh *seen* a niggah?"

"I have seen Dumas."

"I don't know what that institution may be. It's foreign. But all niggahs everywhere ah children. Lawd, don't I know 'em! Perfect children. They'd be as helpless as rabbits without us."

"But have you ever tried to educate them?" She leaned forward with startling earnestness. "Oh, sir, educate them! Set them free. You will be astonished how their souls will bloom, their minds lift and expand!"

The Southerner's mustaches began to work ominously. I saw the Ohioan shift his position and look out at the landscape. Even in the twenties, slavery was a forbidden topic. It was sore. No one but a lover of quarrel even touched it.

The Southerner was answering courteously.

"Madam, you ovehstep youahself. The niggah has no mind. He has a heaht, and with that heaht he loves his masteh. My niggah, now, Cuffy Cockle, out heah

on the rumble. If I was to free him this instant he would fall at my feet, beggin' and weepin' foh me to take him back. Lawd, ma'am, he would hahdly be able to suppoht the news!"

She leaned forward again, her eyes shining like stars. "Try it!" she cried. "Give the youth his freedom! Make this noble experiment in humanity!"

The Southerner was speechless. His face flushed apoplectic, his mustaches working furiously.

"I know," she said more gently. "I know you love him. And it might be difficult to continue your journey without him — so helpless does the master-class become. But think with what noble joy you would proceed. You would have set free a soul — a man — an American. You would have given him his manhood! Oh, sir, think of the privilege!"

Of course she was but a girl, eighteen, I believe, at this time. She was curiously afire with a type of genius, unprecedented in woman. But in my mind this served as no excuse. She had wantonly insulted the old gentleman. I was heartily glad when he brought down his cane with a thump which almost pierced the coach floor.

"Silence, woman!" he thundered. "How da'ah you interfeah in my affaihs! Youah only excuse is that of youah youth and ignorance," he added more gently. "You ah a woman, I will treat you as such. But I beg you, as you love the respect that is due youah sex, do not mention this subject again to any American — to any American!"

He ceased. Above the rattle of the coach I could hear him breathing fumily. The girl herself flushed, but she did not wilt.

"I have hurt you," she said, with almost manlike frankness. "I did not wish to do that. I am deeply interested in the subject."

"So I perceive," said the Colonel dryly.

We proceeded in horrific silence, bumping over stones, creaking into ruts and out again. The second Ohioan, now seeing his chance, began to talk to the young woman, pointing out the objects of the road. For a while she seemed puzzled and worried, but soon revived and became interested in the names of the trees — which the man told her all wrong.

When we arrived at Trenton the Colonel was true to his breeding. He handed the lady out of the coach with all Southern courtesy, and conducted her into the tavern where the landlord mistook her for his daughter.

"No, no, not at all," he responded hastily. "A fellow-travelah, meahly. Cuffy!" he called, "tote the young lady's pohtmanteau to her room. She is dusty and travel-wohn."

I was having my own trouble with her harp, which I knew must travel like glass. Passing me, the Colonel said grimly:

"My deah young man, I wish you joy of youah charmin' companion!"

This, I thought, was particularly unkind, since it was his urging which had broke me down.

CHAPTER XXVIII

PRIVATE DISCUSSION

At the age of eighteen she traveled through this country engaged in private discussion. (Old Harmony pamphlet.)

A LOUD gong summoned us to supper. The company numbered about thirty, for many young bachelors of the town were accustomed to dine at the tavern. All sat together at a long table. My lady came down late, so that we had to enter conspicuously together. I saw her now with her bonnet off, and to my horror her hair was short. It was lightly parted in the middle and curled in brown ringlets all over her head. She was dressed as for a ball. I did not then know that Europeans always dress for dinner. She wore some silvery blue silk with a broad lace kerchief. She had pinned upon it some gorgeous marshmallows which the Ohioan had plucked for her. Her cheeks and likewise her slender nose had been burned a little by the sun and wind of her ride. Most ladies would have managed to avoid this.

At our entrance a great stir went round the table; but she seemed not the least embarrassed, waiting, tall and at ease, until our host should assign us our places. I suffered one of my unpreventable blushes and forgot to pull back her chair. The young man next in place instantly rose and did so. I was furious at being set thus in the public eye.

"Mr. Berry," I said awkwardly to the innkeeper, "this is Miss Macleod, a teacher in our Indiana school."

A smile went round the company. I made no doubt they had regaled themselves with our story. She took her seat graciously and the meal proceeded. Several times she attempted conversation with me; but I could answer only in monosyllables.

The ingratiating young man introduced himself. (Why, I wondered, did every man on the map think he must pay court and wait upon this girl?) "I am Mr. Sessions," he stated, with American solemnity. After this she had no need of me. Sessions proved to be a lawyer and talked really well in a clear, oratorical voice. She asked him innumerable questions concerning our American Government and traits.

"I was overjoyed," she announced, "when I found myself obliged to come to America. Oh, sir, if you had seen, as have I throughout my childhood, the desperate struggle for freedom in our Italy, you would appreciate my happiness in coming here."

I noted that this was now the third country which my protégé claimed.

He explained to her in clear, thoughtful sentences the early difficulties of Congress and the present progress of our country. She listened with an alertness which gave him wings of speech. She tossed back her head of curls. Her voice was not loud, but it had an unfortunate carrying quality.

"Oh," she exclaimed, "who could consider without deep sympathy your little Convention of Seventeen Seventy-Six which, in the name of your young and unskilled people, set at defiance the mightiest nation of the earth! They did it not rashly. They weighed their own weakness. They counted the cost. Yet they dared to

sign for the liberty of their nation and that of the world. I know of nothing in the pages of human history so morally sublime!"

She flushed vividly, and I saw the answer in Sessions's face. Everybody had stopped eating. As a public speech it was admirable. As the table-talk of a female, supposed to be under my protection, it was embarrassing in the extreme.

At four o'clock next morning a very cross and breakfastless company met the coach. But Miss Macleod, whom Garcia had called an invalid, was not cross. She was bright and untired. So also was Mr. Sessions who was again of our party. He was a resident of Trenton, and I knew by his elaborate explanation of business in Philadelphia that until last evening he had had no purpose of journeying thither.

The coach met a boat some miles down the Delaware. We steamed down the river in the lovely morning light. After breakfasting, Sessions sat beside my damsel on the deck, naming the pretty villages and country-seats as we passed. I never saw a man look so happy. He was a handsome fellow, with strong, thoughtful face and brown hair thrown back from his forehead. She, too, was in excellent spirits.

"How glorious!" I heard her exclaim, "to set forward on a journey while the earth is breathing such freshness. I feel like a *preux chevalier* setting forth in fresh armor, seeking adventure through the wide world."

"If you were," said Sessions, "I should enlist under your banner, the banner of the Ideal!"

"The new Ideal," she corrected him, unmindful of his ardent look. "I am traversing your land where new

ideals are coming to realization. Oh, Mr. Sessions, after time-worn Europe —"

"Great Heavens!" thought I, "will her speeches never have an end!"

I heard the Colonel mutter — "There is only one thing moah odious than a female politician and that is a female infidel!"

But Sessions liked it. Oh, how he liked it! He talked of politics with her as if she were a man. Another also liked it — a tall, over-brilliant Irishman who hung persistently about her.

The discussion became general. Others gathered around; Sessions and McVay laughed delightedly over her quick responses. All went swimmingly until McVay cracked a joke entirely too broad. Miss Macleod's face sobered like a judge's and a punitive silence fell. I thought she deserved this, though. She had brought it upon herself by her easy familiarity.

I joined in no talk. I was fully occupied with rehearsing my encounter-to-come with Maclure.

"Well, Seth," I could imagine him saying, "so you have brought your teacher. What is he like?"

"Mr. Maclure, Mr. Garcia compelled me to bring a woman."

"How compelled you? Were you not your own master?"

No, no, I must find some other way to announce it. I tried to think of some other subject. But the inexorable conversation would continue.

"I suppose, my son, that you are at least sure of her voice?"

"I am sure of only one thing, that it is abominable!"

"What! Well, then, her character. She will fit into our social life."

"Mr. Maclure, she will keep the community stirred up like a Christmas pudding!"

At this point I would wish myself dead — as sincerely as most young folk do. And presently we arrived at Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE BATTLE OF THE SUITORS

From Philadelphia Sessions accompanied us down the Delaware to New Castle. Thence eight coaches, lurching through the dark like a procession of great drunkards, brought the steamboat passengers to Frenchtown. There we took a sailboat across Chesapeake Bay to Baltimore, Sessions still continuing with us.

At Baltimore, the Irishman, McVay, greatly to my relief, parted from us. And it was at Baltimore that Sessions met his Waterloo. We put up at the Indian Queen Tavern. That afternoon I met him coming out with a look of abject misery.

"My business will take me back to Trenton," he said. "I must bid you good-bye."

I knew at once that he had spoken to her.

"That's bad," I answered. "I was glad to have you for a fellow-traveler." This was true. I had felt somehow safer with Sessions in our company. He was such a decent chap. He clasped my hand as if he had something to say.

"Remember, Way," — he spoke very low, — "she's alone in a strange land. Of course I know you'll take care of her. But — but be kind, too. She has had some trouble, some grief. Take notice of her when she is quiet."

I was tempted to say that I had never seen her quiet. But the poor fellow was in such trouble that I only shook his hand and answered "yes." I wondered if young

females always resorted to the pathetic in the management of their male friends.

"Are n't you hurrying back rather too quickly?" I ventured. "If you would go along with us a while longer —"

"Way," he said in sudden frankness, "I suppose you guess what's befallen me."

"Yes, but maybe —"

"You don't know how much I said to her."

I grew more in earnest. "But once saying it is n't enough. In these matters — well — are n't you supposed to go at it again and again? To storm the citadel and all that sort of thing?"

What a wilderness of explanation it would save me if Sessions would only take her off my hands!

"Do you suppose I'd turn back," he broke out passionately, "if it were only that? I'd follow her over the world. I'd plead until she'd *have* to love me. But, — well, Way, she does n't exactly say it, — but there is some involving connection over in Italy. She is n't free to marry. I've got to get away. I've got to get away," he repeated miserably.

Something of the reality of his trouble broke in upon me with a sense of chill. "I wish this had n't happened to you," I said seriously.

"I wish to God it had n't," he responded.

My conversation with Sessions served to make me even more apprehensive than before. Miss Macleod and I now traveled on from Baltimore with strangers again, but she speedily made new acquaintance in the thirty-six miles to Washington.

Upon our arrival she timidly but firmly informed me that she must visit the "Infant Senate." Of course I of-

fered to accompany her. During the debate a Senator criticized some action of President Adams. The criticism was sweeping, the rebuttal equally so. As she listened to the wordy war, I saw this ridiculous girl's eyes swim with tears. "They are free to speak their minds — they are actually free," she commented.

After the adjournment we walked together about the Capitol. In a corridor we came upon the very Senator who had made the criticism. To my dismay she at once addressed him, asking some pertinent details of the President's action.

"My dear young miss," he said, after giving her a full explanation, "may I inquire where you got your knowledge of government?"

"I lived for two years with General Lafayette. I were a dullard, indeed, if, listening to him, I had not received some enlightenment."

I thought wrathfully that she might have told me this reassuring fact instead of revealing it casually to a stranger.

"You have been greatly privileged," said the astonished Senator. "Lafayette is our idol here."

At the close of the conversation he clasped her hand; but he looked at me. "Good-bye," he said, "your husband must be happy in such bright companionship as yours. You are wise, you two, to have begun your life so early together."

I turned all colors, nor did she dare look at me during all our returning walk to the hotel.

That day the Irishman McVay reappeared. He gallantly offered to show the young lady the sights of Washington. The man's assumption of proprietorship was, to say the least, offensive. He joined us in the coach office

at four o'clock the following morning. Unfortunately his path and ours now seemed to be the same.

It was at Fredericktown, Maryland, that, happening to pass the taproom door, I heard him talking with the men about the bar. He was using Miss Macleod's name with drunken freedom. To be sure, I really knew very little of her myself. But I did not propose to have him discuss her here in this fashion. I went in and told him so. He looked at me very hard as if measuring my strength and kept silence.

Next day in the coach he was more obnoxious than ever. He made himself so entertaining to the young lady as to exclude everybody but himself. He waited upon her at all stops, he flattered her, meanwhile avoiding all speech with me.

So at Boonsboro I determined to drop him. I waited until he had bought his seat for the next stage. Then I canceled mine and Miss Macleod's. Passing the desk an hour later I noted upon the open book that he had canceled his also. I, therefore, re-bought. Fifteen minutes later he again purchased tickets. I found him in the taproom and determined to have it out with him once and for all.

"Look here, McVay," I said quietly, "I do not wish to travel further in your company. Choose as you like. Go and I will stay, or stay and I will go."

"What I shall do," he said, with impudent eyes, "is to be travelin' along with Miss Macleod."

"I cannot have that."

"You'll have it, and you'll have it as far as I wish," he answered with an oath.

"No," I repeated, "I shall not."

"The like of you won't hinder me!"

"Yes, I shall have to hinder you." I suddenly seemed to be in one of the old crises with Ben Swentley in the cabin, passing through the same reasoning or unreasoning process. For I abandoned talk and flew at McVay. I struck him a blow that sent him staggering headlong. I had not fought any one for years, and I cannot see why I did not get the worst of it. At least if I had been cooler and more skilled, I should have damaged him less. For when my brain cleared, the coachman and bystanders were hauling us apart and I found that I had broken his arm.

I felt thoroughly ashamed and disgraced! I, the well-regulated Communist and scientist, the friend of Maclure, engaged in a tavern brawl!

I at once had McVay cared for and saw him in the hands of a doctor. I engaged a private dearborn for Miss Macleod and myself to set off within an hour. Then I started for the privacy of my own room. I looked the disgraceful part I had played. My coat was torn, my stock hung in a string. And on the stair who should meet me but Miss Macleod herself. I tried to pass.

"Mr. Way," she cried out, "what has happened? Your forehead!"

I put up my hand and found my forehead bleeding. "Miss Macleod," I said, "will you pack your portmanteau quickly? We are going at once in a private wagon."

"But there is some trouble. You have been fighting."

"Miss Macleod," I said, stopping on the stair above her, "I do not know how you may feel about that man McVay, but I have been obliged to persuade him not to go farther with us."

"I am sorry," she said with a frankness well calculated to disarm me; "perhaps I have not been discreet. I am very much chagrined."

"Madam," I said, flaring, "if you could persuade yourself to keep silent as any other female would, we could go upon our journey without further chagrin or disturbance."

"Oh!" she opened her great eyes. "Then I have been giving you trouble all the while — all the while! I did not know that. Indeed, I will do as you wish."

We were soon in the dearborn, box and harp looming large behind us, the tavern folk laughing as they said good-bye. We drove off.

"Mr. Way," she said, "I wish you had not fought that man. If you had warned me, I could have dismissed Mr. McVay myself. He would not have dared to follow me."

I ground my teeth and drove forward.

CHAPTER XXX

THE BEGINNING OF A MYSTERY

At Hagerstown, Maryland, we left our dearborn and caught the coach for Hancock, Pennsylvania. The next day my lady's silence drove me almost to contrition. I was soft-hearted enough to wish I had not spoken so sharply to her.

We were upon the famous National Road. We met endless droves of hogs, traveling from Ohio and Indiana to Baltimore. At other times a sound floated toward us, a very mist of music growing to a multitudinous tinkle, then to a discordant, splendid clanging of bells: and one of the great Conestoga wagons would appear with its red and blue body and tented top, drawn by six, eight, or even ten powerful horses. The horses were richly harnessed and carried each upon his hames six large bells which rang strengthfully as the horses trotted. On their back rode the giant teamsters, who formed a class by themselves and had their own special inns along the road.

I told her that these wagons were bringing Western river-freight from Pittsburgh to the seaboard. She thanked me shyly (or with covert anger, I could not tell which), but she made no comment.

We passed slow-moving emigrant wagons, the father walking beside, the family and all the household gear within. All the romance of the frontier life moved with them. Yet even of these she said no word nor spoke to

any one. However, I need not have worried, for by nightfall she was chatting as freely as ever. It was on the second day that an incident occurred which stopped her talking for a good while to come.

At Allegheny two young girls climbed into the coach, each carrying a huge flowered bandbox. They were full of suppressed glee over "a trip in the stage" and talked giggling in the corner.

"Was n't he just too romantic?" I heard one say. "I wish I'd 'a' dared to speak with him."

"Pshaw, I would n't have minded," said the other with a toss. "I'd 'a' talked fast enough if I could only have spoken his lovely language."

"He talked English, too, you ninny."

The other giggled over her bandbox. "Such funny English! The way he called his servant 'Meo.' And think of having a servant all alone for yourself!"

"But the servant's name was 'Romeo,' " corrected the other.

At mention of the name Romeo, Miss Macleod turned as white as her kerchief. Her eyes showed black with scare as she fixed them on the girls. They, quite oblivious of her, went on with their romantic chatter.

"My pa helped him when he was sick in Fredericktown, and heard him say a lot of things. How his lady-love was named Lucreshy Di Baia, and he was dyin' of love, and the horrid music-man in New York deceived him and told him she had gone to Boston. But he soon found out better."

"I don't believe he was dyin' of love," said Ann, the unromantic. "He had just chills and fever when I saw him. If it had n't been for that chill he'd been in Smith-

field by now." (Our own coach was supposed to reach Smithfield by nightfall.)

I tried to think that the matter did not concern Miss Macleod. But now I saw her lean back in her seat with closed eyes, whether in prayer or in an effort to cope with some situation, I could not determine. Was she fleeing this man? If so, in Heaven's name, why? Evidently our delay at Washington had allowed the traveler, whoever he might be, to overtake and pass us.

At the pretty town of Smithfield we arrived for supper. My companion ate nothing, though she tried hard to hide her depression. When the coach-driver advised us to hasten on at once in order to catch an early coach at the ferry, I saw her sigh as if she had escaped some dreaded thing. This whole change in her was so marked that at first I could do nothing but pity her. Then dawned upon me the part she had made me play in the matter. The girl had forced herself upon me merely to escape from some untoward situation. She was probably no competent musician, though for her own ends she had tried to pass for such. She had used me as a serviceable guide while she chatted and made merry along the way. And the embarrassments she had already caused me were as nothing compared with those in which she was certain to involve me. My anger rose in gusts until I hardly felt able to speak to her for any purpose whatsoever.

We reached Brownsville about half-past four of the morning and were there told to wait for daylight. Our stopping-place was hardly a tavern. The men of the party lay down on the floor of the wretched building with their feet to the fire, grumbling and miserable. I stood

outside puzzling what course to pursue with my lady when she herself came out to me.

"Could we — is there any way of going on at once?"

"No," I said shortly. "We cross the river here. We must wait for the ferry."

"Oh," she queried in a voice I could scarcely believe was hers, "is there no other way?"

"Madam," I turned on her furiously. I could see her. There was a strange moonlight from the toppled, broken moon. "You have something on your mind. As your traveling companion I must know it and know it fully."

She breathed quick and looked about her like a deer caught in a thicket.

"We are bound for New Harmony," I continued. "I am very proud of our town. But there are some mysterious, queer people in it. I have no notion of adding to their number."

"But I am not mysterious," she began mechanically.

"I vow, madam," I interrupted, "you presume too much. You — I must say it — you forced your company upon me. If I am to be your protector, I must know what difficulties are likely to come up. I have at least the right to know whether I am assisting — well, whether the man you are trying to avoid has any rights or claim upon you."

But at this mention she did not shrink. She seemed rather to be endued with a sort of gallantness, as if she had caught breath in her peril.

"No," she said, "he has absolutely no rights nor claim."

"Why, then, are you so afraid of him?"

"He could do me harm," she said; and then repeated it with conviction, "Yes, he could do me harm."

She appeared on the verge of telling me more; then stopped. Sessions's words came back to me. "She is not free." They were doubly significant now.

There was a strained silence. I know not what I must have looked— for she spoke again in a low tone.

"You are right. It is true that I have forced myself upon you. I have used you as I would not have done had I not been in a sore strait. But I will not do it further. There is no reason why I should not make the journey alone."

Now, why did I not accept this offer of relief? Perhaps it was the valor of her slender figure in the moonlight that seized me. Youth with youth does not reason well.

"Nonsense," I said, actually stamping my foot. "You have no idea of the difficulties."

"Could I not take boat at Pittsburgh and go the rest of the way?"

"Probably not. Have you money?"

"A little."

A sudden picture presented itself to my mind. "Suppose your Romeo catches up with you?"

She shrank a little at this.

"Are you Miss Macleod or Miss Lucrezia di Baia? Why are you traveling under a name not your own?"

"Macleod is my real name," she said clearly. She looked direct into my face. "I have never spoken false to you, and I never will."

Just as she finished, some hidden sorrow loomed within her and her face changed. She was always a transparent vessel of emotion. That, indeed, was her power.

"Oh," she exclaimed despairingly, "if it were only

some other who had brought me to this pass. He forgot, he forgot our love!"

"Then you do love the man?" I asked rudely.

"No — no. It was of my grandfather I was speaking." But I felt sure that she referred to a lover; if not this one, then some other.

"Miss Macleod," I said severely, "I believe you are mystifying me."

"No, oh, no," — in her breathless way again. "But, Mr. Way, I had better not tell you. The — the matter does not concern you, and if you think best, I will go elsewhere than New Harmony."

"I have no right to refuse New Harmony to you," I said doggedly.

"It is enough if you do not wish me to go there," she answered.

We had come around the same circle again. Then I foolishly took a hand.

"Can you at least say to me that General Lafayette would speak for you?"

"Oh, yes," she answered eagerly. "General Lafayette stands always ready to be my sponsor. I have his letters. I will give them to you."

Again we stood still.

"We are to have breakfast in a few minutes," I said in a matter-of-fact tone. "I can smell the bacon now. I hope you will eat breakfast if you possibly can. I think we shall have to continue our journey as we have begun."

It was only then that I saw how bitterly she was trembling in the morning chill, and feeling very much of a brute I led her in to the tavern fire.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE STEAMBOAT FRIENDSHIP DOES US AN UNFRIENDLY TURN

At Pittsburgh we found at first no boat. But after two days' delay we embarked on a steamboat bearing the inappropriate name of Friendship. Never shall I forget the relief with which I boarded her. I engaged a good room for Miss Macleod and then saw nothing of her for several days.

When I did see her, it was, of course, because of trouble. She seemed "born to it as the sparks to fly upward."

I was on deck spelling out my French Cuvier, dreaming of my studies which seemed to have receded miles away from me in this interim.

The mate touched my arm. "Be ye the gentleman that's travelin' with the lady that stays in Number 17?"

"Yes."

"Well, sir, at Parkersburgh we took on niggers below. Totin' 'em to N'Orleens. Now this here young miss that won't come out to meals, she comes out at two o'clock in the mornin' all right enough. An' she goes down there to talk to 'em. I thought fust off she was one o' these here Evangels. But bless your buttons, she was n't givin' 'em no religion — ner food neither. She wus talkin' to 'em about freedom, tellin' 'em to remember they wuz American men *an'* women, an' to forgit they wuz black. Sayin' as how things is bound to change. I kin jail 'er

fer it either here or in Kaintuck — an' if she don't stop it, by G—, I will!"

I looked at him in horrified silence.

"I thought 't fust she was yer wife," said he. "Then I seed ye had n't no use fer her, an' I don't wonder."

I closed my book. "I'll speak to her at once," I said.

I went to Number 17 and knocked. The door opened and she stood wrapped in some light blue thing, loose-sleeved, voluminous, a blue band about her head like a Greek. I was startled. The women I had known went either busked and ready, or else slattern. There was no ornamental leisure in our West.

"Miss Macleod," I said, "is it true that you have been going down below decks to talk with the negroes?"

"Yes," she answered. "I hoped it would not be noted."

"It is noted. The authorities are furious. Slavery is a very bitter matter here, Miss Macleod. You had best leave it alone."

"What would they do?"

"Put you in jail. If you were a man they would shoot you."

She hesitated. Then she said with her provoking gentleness, "I don't like leaving off just for that."

"I wish, however, that you would stop it."

Her face filled suddenly with disappointment. "I did not think you would say that, Mr. Way."

"Well," I answered shortly, "I would not like the job of getting you out of jail, especially in your present circumstances."

"Since you wish, I will stop it," she agreed. "But, oh, all the night I think only of them and the miserable

fate that they are coming to. Does that never touch your heart?"

It seemed to me that just now she would be more prudent to dream of her own fate. "Slavery is a deplorable thing for both white and black," I answered sagely. "But the question of slavery is too big to be answered by you or me and certainly not without long thinking beforehand." I bowed and walked away, feeling uncomfortably as if I had taken sides against humanity.

The mate met me on deck. "Well," he grinned, "did ye settle 'er?"

"She will not do it again."

"Bully for you. Ye looked so kind o' easy, I did n't reckon ye would."

There was no further event until the boat grounded on a sandbar near Vevay, Indiana.

Again I tapped at Number 17. She opened quickly. This time she was busked and ready and her eyes very wide with apprehension.

"It has happened as I feared," I told her; "the boat has grounded."

"What will be done?"

"If we cannot get her off, the captain will be obliged to transfer the passengers to whatever boat comes along."

"But *he* might be on it!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, he might, indeed," I said with concern. "It is possible that some of our passengers may prefer to make their way through Kentucky. In that case we will club together and buy a rig."

"Oh, I pray we may get afloat again," she said.

By the next evening it was plain that the Friendship had made her berth and must lie in it. The river was

falling fast. But from what I could gather among the passengers, they all preferred to go by the next boat.

"We'd ruther gamble on it that way," they said, "'cause if ye do git through by boat ye git through quick."

Again I sought her out. "I wish I could help you," I told her, "but we must take the next boat. To be frank with you, I have n't enough money to buy a rig alone."

"I have some here." She turned to her portmanteau and eagerly handed me her purse.

"Yes, this will be enough," I answered to her anxious look.

Still she detained me. "Do people always go by Kentucky?" she queried.

"Yes, the roads on the Indiana side are almost impassable."

"I have thought out a plan," she said timidly. "To go first to Kentucky, and then after nightfall cross the river again to the Indiana side, and travel that way. It would be safer. Would you mind doing that?"

"No, but it would be a very hard journey for you on the Indiana side."

"I don't mind that. I can do it," she said with relief. "There is only one thing; he must not find me."

I secured a skiff from the captain.

"Hit's a heap better by river," he advised.

"Yes, but we think now of going down to Lexington." (I was surprised at the readiness with which this lie came to me.)

I erased Miss Macleod's name from the trunk and harp and re-directed both to Maclure in New Harmony. Then, having completed these ruses, I brought my lady from

her cabin. Together we descended into the skiff and the darkey put us ashore at a Kentucky cabin.

About seven o'clock, there being no moon, we got a canoe and paddled across the dusky river again. I lodged Miss Macleod with a gentle Swiss woman in the Vevay Tavern and went out to buy blankets and gear for the wilderness.

CHAPTER XXXII

MY DAUGHTER COLUMBINE TAKES UP THE TALE AGAIN

Yes, again I shall write instead of father. Father has asked me to do this part of the story. He is so busy preparing for his great geological survey in the West that he cannot think or even dream of anything else. Besides, after he is gone I shall be miserably lonely if I have not something to do. Father wants me to have it ready for a surprise for mother when she returns from Hayti.

But as to the story, I believe I can write it almost better than father himself, for I am like an onlooker seeing both sides. Has not the lady herself revealed her part of it to me? And has not father told me his part so often that I know the heart and motion of him every step of the way?

CHAPTER XXXIII

COLUMBINE'S NARRATIVE

III. INTO THE GREAT WOODS

By rare good fortune Seth Way was able to hire a dearborn from the Swiss storekeeper.

"Leave it a' Jeem Keeple," he said. "Jeem — he breeng hees produce to me. He breeng the carriage back also. Then so I have heem again."

"And what can I do beyond Jim Keeple's?" Seth asked.

"*Mon dieu!* But how shall I know?" he answered easily.

They started early. Miss Macleod came out refreshed like morning after rain and with new gratitude in her eyes. Seth stowed the portmanteaus and blankets behind and added thereto a smoked ham and some of the good white bread of Vevay. The Swiss woman kissed the girl good-bye — looking at the pair with puzzled eyes.

"It will be a rough way," she said. "I fear the young lady does not conceive how rough." And Seth felt keenly that this was truth.

Soon the little cabins were left behind with their fragrant, steep vineyards facing the river; then the primeval shadow threw its mantle over them and the horse's feet were hushed in the fallen leaves of centuries. It was the Great Forest.

Here Seth spoke for the first time. "It is like this all the way to the prairies. There the Great Forest swerves north, joins the pine forests of the Great Lakes, and

marches over the Western Mountains. Then it spreads south again in undiscovered regions. No one knows its borders. I suppose it must end at the sea."

"Yes, yes," she said. But she was too awed to give much answer.

About them the giant trees stood like persons. And who shall say that the multitudinous unit called a tree has not some consciousness of its own obedience and beauty! High overhead the canopy was thick and full of whispers. For a while the vast spaces were flecked with green and weaving sunshine, then the twilight completed itself and the road became a dim corridor winding between massive boles. However, the way itself was inconceivably rough. Now the wheels rose sharply over a hidden stump and thumped down in a fashion to rattle one's very bones. Indeed, the road was little better than a wide path hewed through the timber. Now it descended the banks of a creek, for there were few bridges. The little vehicle trembled in the power of the yellow water. The stream was wide and stakes set by some friendly hand showed the path of the shoal. But Seth knew there would not be friendly stakes at every stream. His responsibility for the girl oppressed him and he drove in silence.

He believed that she, as is often the case with women, had a sure instinct of him and knew that she could trust herself in his care. But her trust did not touch or soften him. She seemed to be devoid of consideration. And when they should arrive at Harmony the situation was sure to prove difficult, perhaps impossible, for him and even more so for herself.

At last she broke the silence. "Mr. Way, I have seemed

to take all you do for me as a matter of course. But I hope you realize — well, that it is to me anything but a matter of course."

"I'd rather you would n't thank me," said Seth soberly. He paused and the wheel passed over an unavoidable stump. "This whole journey," he added, slacking his reins again, "is something I have had to do and I can believe that you have had to do it too."

After this rebuff the girl kept very still. In all their first day's journey they passed but a solitary pair of travelers, a man and a woman seated upon one horse. Both were smoking pipes. These spoke a friendly greeting, and again the forest stillness closed.

At noon they came out upon the Ohio River again. The road, if road it could be called, followed in general the river-bank, though it often for miles curved deep into the woods to avoid the wide mouths of creeks or to cut across the river-bends.

On the high river-bank they ate their silent noonday meal. Seth unharnessed the horse and let him graze. Then he wandered to the water's edge idly searching for shells.

"If it's going to be like this," he muttered, "it will be unbearable. Sessions can talk to females and so can that fool McVay. I can't, and, what is more, I don't want to. But I suppose we are in for it now." And he came back with that last phrase looking from his face. Toward nightfall they came to a settler's cabin.

"Miss Macleod," spoke Seth in a worried voice, "I'm sure you do not realize how miserably these squatters live. You will have to sleep in — well, just the general room with all the family."

"Oh, Mr. Way!" said the girl almost tearfully, "please don't think me capable of complaining. That would be too much!"

The man received them with a rough but hearty welcome. The children scuttled for the woods at their approach, quite as Seth had scuttled years ago. The mother received them staring. The supper of corn-pone and greasy bacon fulfilled his worst predictions.

Then Seth went out in the twilight to hunt, came back late with a brace of rabbits, wrapped himself in a blanket, and slept in the forest.

CHAPTER XXXIV

COLUMBINE'S NARRATIVE

IV. SHOWING THE ADVANTAGE OF SCIENTIFIC CONVERSATION

NEXT morning Seth's young lady came limping from the bruises of the ride, but she was trying so hard to hide her discomfort that Seth did not refer to it. They climbed early into the dearborn and drove as before. They sat side by side, these two young living creatures, and the forest stillness was not deeper than the silence between them.

Suddenly Seth handed her the reins, leaped down, and began to dig eagerly in the hollow of a tree. He brought forth a handful of small dead beetles and examined them gleefully.

"One is alive," he cried. "What a find!"

To the girl he seemed all at once a different person. She saw him hurriedly pull out his portmanteau and open a set of tiny boxes. In one he placed the dry beetles, in another he pinned the live one, and labeled both.

When he climbed into the dearborn again he was full of animation. "Lesueur will be delighted," he said, resuming the reins.

"Monsieur Lesueur is a friend?"

"Yes, one of our splendid men in New Harmony."

"And he is fond of beetles?"

"He is a naturalist. He went out under Pérouse as artist and draftsman on the ill-fated scientific expedi-

tion to New South Wales. It turned out that he was the only survivor. He had been left at Botany Bay to complete the study of the fauna and flora there while his ship, proceeding to the Indies, was wrecked. So he had to make the entire report to the French Government. Perhaps you have heard of him in Paris?"

But she had to say No. Again the conversation lapsed.

"Monsieur Lesueur must be a famous man," she ventured after a while.

"Yes."

"Are there many such in New Harmony?"

"Yes, a good many scientists."

"Sometimes," she said reflectively, "it seems as though Fate were capricious in her kindnesses."

She thought at first that he was not going to answer. But presently he seemed to have been puzzling over it. "What do you mean when you say that?"

"Oh, Fate is forcing me to go to the very place where I most wish to go."

"Do you feel like that about Harmony?" he asked. Praise of his town was very sweet to Seth Way. He forgot how nearly he had refused to take her there.

"You see," he said boyishly, "it is n't merely a town. It never has been that. It's — an idea working out.. And I believe it is the one place in the world where scientists can live without being sneered at and distrusted."

"Good!" thought the girl; "I believe he is going to talk."

But conversation came not easy to this forest-bred young man. After a little he fished out a book from under the seat. "I had this in my portmanteau and thought

it might while away our time. Italian is not so hard for me, but I make out badly with the French."

She turned the leaves with book-loving touch.

"*Recherches sur les ossements fossiles de quadrupèdes, par Baron Cuvier,*" she read aloud. "I met Cuvier once."

"Did you! What was he like?" In his enthusiastic question Seth turned his face toward her and she noticed that his eyes were the most intense blue she had ever seen.

"I saw him in his university robes after a lecture," she said. "It was a long flowing robe of violet velvet, bordered with ermine, and decked with the ribbons of his orders."

"But fixed up that way he must have looked — well — like a monkey."

"No, no. He was a beautiful, benignant figure. Cuvier is so simple and sincere. No finery could hide the dignity of such a man."

"I am glad of that," said Seth as though it were a personal matter. "I would like to feel that the man matched up to his writings and discoveries. Think of his finding those colossal bones under Paris and piecing them together so that the world can see again those terrible old monsters. Yet, in spite of all that Cuvier has so clearly shown, they are still mysterious to me — the most mysterious of all geological mysteries."

"But why more than other things?"

"Well, you see," he said, "they are there in France, and we don't know how they got there. They are like nothing alive there now. Cuvier says some great catastrophe destroyed them and that the present animals of Europe came over from some other continent. But we

cannot connect these geological giants with present species *anywhere*. When we try, we soon lose ourselves in unscientific speculation. Cuvier urges that we content ourselves with the study of the separate types, without speculating too far on the relations between the types. But that brings us to a blank in the thought. And having come thus far I cannot content myself. I *must* grope farther."

Like so many minds of his day, Seth Way was feeling toward Darwin's great clue.

"But why should I say all this," said he, in sudden shyness, "when you could be reading Cuvier's own words?"

This privilege did not so overwhelmingly appeal to her. But she turned to the book and began translating it into unhesitating and beautiful English. She stopped only at the technical words. These he soberly explained.

"I have two more books," he said in one of her pauses. "One on the 'Great Geological Catastrophes,' and Cuvier's 'New Classification of Animals.' Perhaps we can go through both of those before we get home."

Her eyes danced with amusement and she had to look down quickly to her reading to hide her laughter.

But sometimes his explanations led far afield and were vivid with interest. She began to marvel at the enormous fund into which this youth dipped at will.

CHAPTER XXXV

COLUMBINE'S NARRATIVE

V. MORE CONVERSATION BUT OF THE LADY'S CHOOSING

Two days brought them to Jim Keppel's. Heavy-footed Jim, his cheek bulging with tobacco, welcomed them while the children as usual scuttled off. Mrs. Jim, pale with a five-day-old baby in her arms, stood at the door.

"More comp'ny," she moaned. "Hit never rains but it pours." But Jim helped them out of the dearborn.

"We ben havin' mor'n our sheer to-day," he said, eager to talk. "They was a keelboat ketched on a snag and went under right down thar," pointing to the river, which flowed august and eternal below the disconsolate hut. "The man he drownded quick, but the woman an' her younker I got out. Eh? Yes, they're inside." He jerked his head toward the cabin door.

The girl followed his gesture pityingly. "Poor woman!" she said. "What *will* she do?"

"Oh, we'll keep her till she gits her breath like," said Jim kindly. "She hain't got nobody nor nothin' in the world."

"How black her world must look to her to-day, poor woman!" she repeated. "Can I help?" she asked Seth in an undertone. "Would I intrude if I went in?"

"Gracious, no! I'm afraid it's expected of us to go in and stare."

The girl limped to the cabin as well as she could for her stiffness from the long ride. Seth tended his horse which

he must now leave here with the dearborn. He hung about with Jim Keppel extracting by degrees information as to horses in the neighborhood. For upon these he must now depend.

"And I never once asked her if she could ride," he thought disturbedly.

Toward supper-time he went into the cabin with Jim. He found the usual cabin confusion. Mrs. Jim was getting supper over the open fire. Mrs. Hackett, the rescued woman, was helping her. The air was heavy with frying bacon — frying present and fryings past. Children were everywhere.

Seth did not at first see Miss Macleod in the dim and crowded room. She was in the far corner on a low seat by the fire with Mrs. Hackett's baby across her knees. The child was clean and at peace. She must have bathed it herself. Now she was softly wrapping it in her own silk shawl. There seemed a star-like quiet in the corner where she sat.

Seth did not dare cross over to her, but stood looking, for she had not seen him enter. Then, finding courage, he picked his way across and sat down on the hearth.

The child had in its eyes an unearthly, distant look.

"Is it very ill?" he asked.

"No," she smiled. "He is only going to sleep. Think how near death he was this morning in that terrible river, and to-night so quiet and so well! So many of the little ones out here in the forest are thin and ill, but look —" She held out the baby's chubby arm for him to see.

"Ah, there he goes," she whispered. And as she softly bent above the child its lovely eyelids sank, lifted again, and then sank finally, shutting the little one into his own infinity of slumber.

"Victuals is ready," broke in Jim's voice, and they all trooped to the loathly meal.

As Seth sat at table with the rough, dull-feeding persons, he felt strangely as if he had been brought back from a dream of some finer world.

They had to delay two days at the cabin before Seth could secure his horses. Then they rode away at daybreak, side by side. And as Seth saw how she sat her horse, he did not wonder that she had smiled when he asked if she could ride.

Miss Macleod was sad or else preoccupied. The presence of others had been a relief to them both. Seth was quite unskilled to break the silence. At last she broke it herself.

"Oh, why is it," she cried, "that books are always talking about *strong* pioneer women! They are not strong. They are tired and ill and hopeless."

"You mean Mrs. Keppel," said Seth. "Yes, I saw her cling to the table to keep from falling."

"I saw you give her a chair. And oh, the look of puzzled thanks on her gaunt face!"

"Her baby is only a week old," said Seth gently. "Jim ought not to make her work."

"But he did, he did! Oh, I don't know which woman to pity most. The one who has lost her husband or the one who possesses hers."

"On that score they're both equally to be pitied. The other will have her a husband soon enough."

"But she loved that drowned man! She told me so."

"I know. But they *have* to marry in the wilderness."

"But that is horrible! Don't you think it is?" she cried, aghast.

"Yes, I do," he answered slowly. "My mother was like that."

It was the farthest from what Seth had meant to say. This personal turn of their talk filled him with confusion. Why did the girl trap him like this!

"I was not *blaming* the woman —" she began.

"Don't take it back." Seth spoke fiercely. "It *is* horrible. You cannot know how bad it is, and how the little ones die and — And we always had to bury them ourselves!" With the shifting of some mental screen the whole was there, and the grief, too, for her to see. She could find no word. To her European mind it was no doubt impossible that this blue-eyed decorous youth had been even as those squatter children scuttling off at sound of human voice, and burying his own little brothers in the woods. It was long before she spoke again, and the soft stepping of the horses was the only sound.

"Well," she ventured at last, "I'm glad I am one of them."

"Of whom?" he asked. For his thoughts had been far away.

"Of the women, so that I can fight for them. Nobody cares. You men know that we have to suffer in life, and you prepare us for that by keeping us delicate and tender indoors. We are not allowed to run nor leap nor be alive. The clinging vine is all very flattering to the oak's strength. But sometimes, woodmen tell me, the vine clings so heavily that it drags the oak down to its death. Of course it does! Perhaps some day men will learn. Suppose," she cried, "it had been you and I who had come upon Mrs. Hackett in the river there. You would have leaped in as Jim Keppel did, while I, of course, would have waited on the bank like a clod."

"But I would n't have thought of your helping," said Seth rather simply.

"Why not?"

She clapped this upon him so suddenly that he stopped, and gazed at her with changing thoughts.

"I guess I don't know why not," he said, flushing. "It would be rather fine to do a thing like that together."

It was not possible for reticence to endure forever. Besides, that accidental self-revelation of his had opened the door and Seth began to talk more easily of the things they met and passed. A squirrel leaped, vital, gray, and quivering across their path. Seth told her of its quick, darting life. "It sometimes seems as though squirrels must be immortal," he said. "In all my forest-searching I have never found a dead squirrel."

They came upon a lofty outlook where the river grandly turned its course and swept close in to the hillside where they rode. The bank below them was cruelly torn and scarped by the current of the river and by the abrading floods from above. A towering tulip tree, bared to a single root, hung in its last peril over the space.

"One more flood will take it," said Seth soberly, and told her of the swift yearly changes of the river's course, described the law of currents, even stopping his horse to draw her a diagram.

In the afternoon they came to a famous old sycamore, one of those which before there were towns to mark the course was set down in the navigator's books as a landmark. It was hollow and so large that he bade her ride through it. Its branches, mighty and white as snow, lifted and zigzagged abroad carrying its green roof to the sky. It sanctified the landscape where it stood.

"It is as perfect as a cathedral," she said.

"Or as a world," he answered.

This day, as they ate lunch by their tethered horses, his laugh rang out boyishly and again. She had not heard him laugh before. Later, as he pushed his horse ahead through the wood, she heard him humming a curious backwoods tune.

CHAPTER XXXVI

COLUMBINE'S NARRATIVE

VI. IN WHICH IS SHOWN THAT SETH FOREKNEW THE DANGERS OF THE WAY

NEXT day they started in a clear sunrise. But by ten o'clock it was raining mistily and by noon a steady downpour was drumming through the woods. Then the wind began. The great trees bent and groaned and curtsied with unwilling suddenness. Branches pearled with shower struck their faces or brushed along the horses. It was impossible to ride a rod without a drenching.

"I ought never to have brought you out in this," said Seth in much distress.

"Could you control the weathers?" she answered cheerily. "Travelers must be content."

But at every fresh downpour she could see a shadow pass Seth's face. Seth knew the forest conditions better than she. They came to no cabins, and this was unfortunate, for darkness would fall early. He took out a blanket and wrapped it about her. It helped a little.

It was not long before the path, as he had feared, dipped down to another creek. They could hear its roaring, for the rains had swelled it.

"Wait here," he told her. "I must try the ford first."

He rode out slowly, never urging his horse, but talking to it continually. He knew that for this business its brain was better than his. The flood grew deeper. Now he felt the water lap his stirrups. The current was rather swift, too.

"It will never do to bring her out in this," he told himself. "Then can you keep her in this wood all night?" he answered himself aloud.

Now he felt the rhythmic, curious swimming motion of the horse beneath him. He was about to turn back when unexpectedly the hoofs found the bottom and he was ascending the farther bank. Then he returned.

"It's a hard choice," he said anxiously. "The woods are certainly not very inviting to-night, but I fear we shall have to stay where we are. I can soon build a roaring fire and brush shelter for you."

"Did you get across?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Then why cannot I?"

"My horse had to swim several yards and the current is swift."

"But cannot my horse swim, too?"

"Do you mean to say you could venture and not lose your head?" he demanded.

"I am sure we had better try," she said quietly.

He brought out of his saddlebag a rope which he tied about her horse's neck. Then he quickly instructed her. His voice sounded stern in the darkness.

"When the horses swim, you will be swept slightly downstream. You must not be startled."

"No," she anwered.

"If I give you some unexpected command, you will not hesitate?"

"No," again.

"I will hold your horse as close as possible to mine. Mine knows the way. Horses do not forget. You can trust them," he said more kindly.

They went down the slippery bank into the creek. The roar of the swollen stream was louder than she had supposed. The water as it touched her feet was unbelievably cold. She heard Seth's voice in the darkness talking cheerily to the horses. Once he spoke to her.

"Now we are sweeping downstream. Don't be startled."

Then they came out and scrambled up to safety. He pulled her horse abreast of his.

"Are you all right?" he asked, relief ringing in his voice. Then he dismounted, brought out a dry blanket and wrapped her newly in it.

"It was good of you to let me cross over," she said gratefully. "Most men would not have trusted me."

"But you did not seem afraid."

"The swimming motion interested me so that I forgot the danger. Was there danger?"

"There might have been if you had n't kept steady," he said, in a tone full of praise.

They went forward again, her horse's nose by the flank of his. Every few moments he would call. "Are you all right?"

And her rich, cheery tone would come back. "Yes — yes!" until it became a confident antiphony in the dark.

"How can you see in this blackness?" she asked.

"It is something to have been in the woods all your life," he told her.

Then suddenly it was no longer black. A lighted cabin shone close at hand.

"It is afire," she cried.

"No," he said. "They've taken out the mud-filling from between the logs to keep cool in the summer.

That's squatter forethought! I reckon they'll chink up after this."

Indeed, through every crack and cranny shone the flaming hearth. It was like an old iron lantern. As they came near they could see through the open doorway (Heaven knows why it was open) the man and his numerous family, their faces in the glow.

"How sweet and safe," she said softly. "They have only the storm to fear — no treachery of men, no terrifying arrests, or worse."

He wondered what memory of alarms had crossed her thought.

The two were, of course, made welcome in the single room of the cabin.

Seth fetched her pack up to the blazing fire.

"Now," he said, quite father-like, "you will manage to get warm and dry. The women will help you."

"But what about you?"

"Now, don't you worry over an old woodsman," he said with a merry smile.

CHAPTER XXXVII

COLUMBINE'S NARRATIVE

VII. "BEHOLD AGAIN THE HABITATIONS AND THE TRAVELED WAYS OF MEN"

They had rain for several days of the journey, but it cleared as they came out upon the Ohio River again at New Albany.

"Here," said Seth, "we strike good traveled roads all the way to Vincennes."

It was noon and dinner-time. For a week they had eaten no food save that which the poor cabins afforded. They were hungry and the smell of the good tavern dinner wafted out to them delectably.

A stage-coach awaiting its horses was at the door. Down at the river a steamboat had just set her gang-plank ashore and passengers were hurrying off to take the stage north through Indiana. Seth saw the girl's face cloud as she watched the men in the distance. Then it cleared again. Her pursuer evidently was not there.

They had barely time to hurry into the tavern and make themselves tidy, when the big bell rang for dinner.

The travelers trooped in with measureless content. There was fried chicken and hot biscuit, coffee steaming good, baked catfish, ham and cornbread. Then fell the clatter of knives and forks. The meal afforded little conversation. Seth looked upon his lady with satisfaction. She had been uncomplaining of the unwholesome fare and miserable conditions of their long forest ride and now was enjoying the good dinner with a healthy relish.

Suddenly the stage-horn sounded. The meal was scarce begun. The host and hostess were prudently absent. It was an old trick of wayside taverns.[1]

The people indignant, growling, snatched up last morsels and hasty gulps of coffee and hurried out one and all. Miss Macleod, too, rose; but Seth sat still, his eyes looking first indignant, then dancing like a boy's.

"You sit down, Miss Macleod," he said. "You must eat a good dinner."

"But the coach!" she cried. "There's not another for a week and our bags are on it."

"Well, you take your time with your cornbread and chicken. You'll get the stage all right."

She was hurriedly tying on her bonnet. Seth rose and busied himself leisurely about the long table. She did not notice what he was doing. Then they heard the stage clatter away.

"Don't worry," said Seth, drawling a little, "you'll get the stage."

"Not that one surely."

"Then all the more time to eat in peace."

The hostess came in and looked greatly surprised when she saw them sitting there.

"Why!" she exclaimed.

"Yes'm," said Seth, "we just thought we'd finish our dinner. You've some pudding, have n't you?"

"Yes," she said, flustered, and brought it in.

[1] Note by Columbine Way:

The reader will kindly not locate this tavern as any now remembered in New Albany. It flourished only for a short time — and good reason. The name of its proprietor I find is now unknown there. I write this so as not to cause hard feeling among my friends in New Albany.

June 1, 1847.

"And now a spoon?"

"Hain't ye got one thar?"

"No," said Seth, looking around over the scrambled board, "I don't see any."

"Not any! Why!" She came close. She began to examine the table hurriedly.

"Why, they hain't a tarnal spoon ner fork on the table. Why — good lands!"

"Dear me!" said Seth sympathetically.

"Somebody's took 'em!" she screamed.

"Well, now, I thought that man was acting queer," said Seth, "going round the table quick-like while the rest were scrambling out. Yes'm, he went with the others."

"Good lands!" she screamed again. "Hey, Monny! Monny Decker! Come hyar!" She ran into the barroom to her husband.

Seth's blue eyes suddenly spilled their merriment, gazing into Miss Macleod's face.

"What are you laughing at?" she asked, responding with her own puzzled laughter. (Why had she never before realized how good looking he was?)

A hurried horse-and-rider now went pounding down the road in the direction the stage had taken.

Seth and Miss Macleod had finished their meal at leisure and stood ready, cloaked and hatted, when the stage came lumbering back.

"Mon Decker — you low-down lyin' jackdaw!" the coach-driver shouted. "What ye mean holdin' me back like this? That feller ain't got yer spoons."

The passengers, wondering, climbed out again. They wandered wistfully back to the cold table.

"That's a mighty good pudding there," spoke Seth.

"Better have some now you are here. And you'll find spoons under the table."

A shout of laughter followed. "Well, that's the darndest," cried one.

"Jiminy Christmas! Serves 'em right," cried a Kentuckian.

"Fall to! Fall to! I callate that stage out thar needs to cool off!" shouted another.

Miss Macleod mingled in the merriment.

"But," she said, "nobody's angry. Not even that woman."

"What's the use o' gettin' mad?" cried the travelers. "We got the best of 'em that time. An' all along of that slick man o' yourn!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII

COLUMBINE'S NARRATIVE

VIII. THE FOREIGN COUNT IN THE ASCENDANT AND A REAL ACCIDENT THIS TIME

The stage-coach reached Greenville that night and according to custom started on again at daybreak.

The Kentuckian, who was acquainted with Henry Clay, told Miss Macleod lively anecdotes of that statesman's youth, at which she laughed again. Seth joined in the talk, wondering how he could ever have thought such converse tiresome. Why should she not exercise her eager mind? Why not gather information in a new land? Why not — why not anything?

A long-coated preacher had climbed in at a cross-road and joined more or less in the talk.

"And what is your particular belief?" asked Miss Macleod, turning to him.

"I am a Methodist preacher, madam," he answered in his deep, preaching voice.

"And your church is no doubt in Greenville?"

"No, madam, I am a circuit-rider. I sow the Gospel seed far and near. Then I return as St. Paul did to see what seed has fallen upon good ground."

"That is a beautiful way. It is like the early Church. What is your most difficult field?"

"New Harmony," he answered, growing intense in a moment. "That town, gentlemen" (turning to the company), "that town is a menace to our State — Infidels.

It is full of them. They take pleasure in flouting Holy Writ. Their school-teaching is rank blasphemy. Their practice — who knows what their practice is? I tell you where Christ is absent there the devils are gathered together."

Miss Macleod gasped. She looked at Seth, but he, not wishing to embroil her, made no answer to the man. Seth half feared that she might be affected by this stuff. But now was no time to reassure her.

"Madam," pursued the preacher, "I see you have never heard of the place. I'll spare you the particulars."

Now Heaven knows she had plenty of reasons to keep still about her destination. But the temptation to championship was too much for her.

"I *have* heard of it," she said very clearly. "I have heard of it from General Lafayette — whom you Americans so revere. He speaks nothing but praise of New Harmony."

"Lay-fiette? He wa'n't never in Harmony that ever I heard of. What does he know about the place?"

"He knows its founder and its founder's son. For that matter, all England knows them. Whatever may be said of the *wisdom* of Robert Owen's plan, no one has ever spoken evil of the *man* or his purposes."

"But I call him evil!" thundered the preacher.

The fact was that this particular divine had suffered a defeat of pulpit controversy in Harmony and the thing was bitter in him.

"You have no right to call him so," she retorted. "Robert Owen's speeches and pamphlets are open to all men. They are concerned with modes of human government. Owen's only sin is that of speaking truth that is new.

Oh, sir, pause before you accuse a man who loves his fellow-men with all his heart!"

"He loves 'em. Yes, *loves* to lead 'em to damnation!" The preacher's brow beetled and his eyes struck fire.

"No — no," she pleaded. "If you could but meet those whom his love has touched!"

"Madam, — " the preacher leaned forward, thrusting his gaunt face toward her, — "madam, I can believe that you are going there!"

"I certainly am — and thankfully."

"Miss Macleod," Seth put in quietly, "I think the gentleman hardly wishes to be convinced."

"You are going there," repeated the man. "By your boldness, I would almost suspect that you are not married to the young man who goes with you!"

"Pray do not merely suspect it," returned the girl. "It is true. He is naught to me but a traveling companion. He has helped me on my way."

"Oh, Miss Macleod!" cried Seth ruefully.

In the embarrassing pause which followed they suddenly were aware that they were lurching in a most dangerous manner. They could hear the shouts of the driver.

"Git up, Jo! You, Modoc, if ye don't move — I'll swop ye fer a mule!"

"Why for is he choppin' them horses?" inquired the Kentuckian. "Hain't they goin' fast enough?"

A look to rearward showed another stage, lurching in pursuit. They would have heard it sooner had they not been so occupied with their controversy. Now close at hand the pursuing driver filled the air with jolly oaths.

Miss Macleod blanched. She looked at Seth with wild appeal.

"It's Giraldi!" she whispered.

Quickly he laid his hand over hers. "Don't be frightened," he said. "That man shall not touch you. I'll see to him."

"Look-a-here," yelled the preacher, reaching through the front window and jerking at the driver's coat-tails. "You stop racin' those horses! I'll have the law on you. Do you hear? The law, I tell you!"

"I bet we git to Paoli fust!" shouted the Kentuckian gleefully.

But our travelers certainly did not get to Paoli "fust." At this moment the stage, with a prodigious heave, went over. The four horses kicked twenty ways, tore loose, and fled like deer. The rival stage flew by with a howl of triumph and left them in their tangle.

By a miracle no one was injured. The party ruefully clambered out, the preacher still clamoring for the law, the Kentuckian nursing a bruised shoulder. "You hain't no driver!" the latter roared with an oath at the coachman. "With them cattle y' ought to 'a' beat easy!"

But the coachman was prudently setting off in chase of his horses.

"Them's the two coaches to Paoli," explained the Kentuckian. "It's always a race who'll git thar fust. An' we ought to 'a' beat. I lost my bet."

"Racin' 's wicked!" from the preacher. "I presume," he added, "we had better set forth for the nearest house. The Widow Booram lives not so far from here. She's a goodly woman. She'll take us in."

And they all limped off together.

Seth, meanwhile, had lifted Miss Macleod and was brushing the mud from her dress.

"Are you really unhurt?" he marveled.

But she could not listen. "What was it? What is it?" she cried in terror. "Was it Signor Giraldi in that coach?"

"No, I don't think so. The coaches are always betting and racing. The preacher's right. The law ought to stop it."

He reached for her luggage. "We'll follow to Widow Booram's," he said.

He noted immediately that she limped. But she laughed it off. She limped only a very little, but it delayed them behind the others. They had not far to go. As they came up the widow stood at her doorway, her mouth very set, her eyes curiously roving over them.

"Be ye the couple a-goin' to Harmony?" she inquired.

"Yes."

"We don't want no such trash here," she said roughly. "I've heard o' that godless town."

"Will you turn us out in the woods?" asked Seth indignantly.

" 'T ain't nothin' to me whar ye go, so long as ye don't come in hyar," she said harshly. "I won't hev ye in hyar, though."

The girl touched Seth's arm. "Oh," she said, "let's go quickly somewhere else. It is the first unkindness we have met."

"At least tell us the next house," said Seth, facing the woman again.

"There's them no-devil Quakers livin' up the road, mebbe they'll take ye in." She went in and shut the door.

Tears shone in the girl's eyes.

"It's the unkindness," she said. "Somehow I did not think it could be so here in America."

"Harmony has met it often," he answered. "Sometimes only jest and contempt, but often lies and hatred."

He took her arm. "You are still lame," he said with concern. But after he had said it, she walked quite straight again.

The road led through a magnificent wood with notable trees.

"These backwoods people," said Seth, "even when they are not opposed to Owen, can see nothing in Harmony except that Owen has played the fool. 'Look at the money,' they cry. 'He throws it away. He can't possibly get anything back!' Think of it! Robert Owen getting money back!"

She came to an unexpected stop.

"I'll have to rest a moment," she said, a little breathlessly. "My foot does n't get better."

Presently she rose again.

"I'll help you more," said Seth. "Put your weight on my arm."

As they went forward a surprising revelation broke upon Miss Macleod.

"Do you know," she said, "I believe I am sometimes a little too frank of speeeh. If I had n't said so much to that clergyman we should n't have been in this trouble."

Seth's eyes twinkled. But he was really anxious. They were advancing slower and slower through the deep wood when suddenly she stumbled over a root and came down in a heap.

"Oh, how stupid!" she cried. "How ridiculous this is!"

Seth saw her face grow alarmingly pale and a quiver of tense pain circle her lips.

"I wish you would let me examine that foot," he said seriously. "I think I ought to know what we have to deal with."

She shook her head. She was too occupied with her effort at self-control to speak. He stood looking down at the troubled member in anxious thought. Then he snapped his fingers impatiently.

"Dag gone it!" he cried. "Why can't I remember the position of those bones! The metatarsus, the proximal phalanges —"

She laughed out in spite of her misery.

"Oh, you comical man! What good can your Latin do now?"

She got to her feet again, but the pain this cost her filled her eyes with tears.

"You see you can't," said Seth. "Miss Macleod," he added, setting down their luggage, "I'm going to carry you to that no-devil Quaker's."

"No," she cried, "leave me here. You can come back for me with a horse."

"I will do nothing of the kind. It's growing dark."

"That does n't matter."

"It does matter. I don't favor catamounts."

"I'm almost as tall as you — too tall to be carried."

"Do you realize," he said more gently, "that if the trouble is with the astragalus bone, for instance, and you walk — it would probably make you lame for life? Do you suppose I am going to risk that for a whim?"

"But you shall not carry me," she said with finality.

Then to her amazement the docile one quietly lifted her in his arms and went forward without a word. Her pain even in this going was evidently very great.

"I'm sorry this hurts you so," said his deep voice. "It won't be far now. We are already farther than the widow said."

Some while later a very miserable and bedraggled couple presented themselves at the threshold of Enoch Vail.

Miss Macleod stood leaning against the doorpost, Seth supporting her.

"Tut, tut, what in the world?" said old Enoch coming placidly to the door.

"The stage broke down," began Seth.

"It did! Where are the others?"

"At Mrs. Booram's."

"What — she sent thee all this way and thy wife hurt, too."

"She is not my wife," said Seth promptly.

"We are going to New Harmony," said Miss Macleod, the irrepressible. "If you feel about it as Mrs. Booram did, you must not take us in!"

"Oh — New Harmony?" said Enoch slowly.

"Enoch," sounded a rich voice from within. Seth had not noted the tall Quakeress behind her husband. Now he saw her in her pure cap and ample kerchief. "I have let thee speak first, Enoch, as is right. But thy prudence outruns kindness. We will first help them. Then thee can ask questions."

"Thank you, madam," said Seth from his heart.

He lifted his lady again and bore her in to a chair. There her eyes closed. She was spent with pain. The dame hurried out.

"Tell her," murmured Miss Macleod, "that I have never fainted and I won't now."

(The female of those days was expected to faint. It was almost bad form not to.)

When the Quakeress returned with a steaming basin and with her gentle daughter attending, she found Seth on his knees, feeling and testing the injured foot.

"It's not the astragalus," he cried gladly, "and indeed I can find no break at all!"

But already the Quakeress was kneeling in his place and had the foot in the hot water.

"Young man," she said, not looking up, "I have set more bones than thee is years old. Mary and I are here. Thee is to go out."

CHAPTER XXXIX

COLUMBINE'S NARRATIVE

IX. A FOREST PARADISE

THE waiting days which followed were vacant and strange. Seth wandered about, idle for the first time in his life. The broken journey made him impatient, the companionship suddenly closed left him lost. He could not even interest himself in the limestone fossils with which the neighborhood abounded. He could only think in gladdening flashes of his stumbling hither through the wood with the slender burden in his arms.

As often as he dared, he asked the Quakeress about her. At first the only answer was that the young lady was in pain, then that the pain was gone. After that, the girl for three successive days slept the round of the clock.

"Thee must have hurried her a weary way," said Mrs. Vail severely. "Thee should have remembered that she is city-bred."

"But she is very strong," said Seth.

At which the tall gray dame went off, shaking an indignant head.

Later Seth ventured into the kitchen.

"There is no danger — of a fever?"

"Oh, no, no; she will do very well," she answered as if humoring a child.

When Seth, in sheer desperation, began to collect specimens, Mrs. Vail cleared her best table in the corner of the living-room, and in spite of her rigid neatness, allowed Seth to spread his stones upon it.

"It's a new kind of knowledge," she told her husband. "It may possibly be dangerous, but as yet I can see no harm."

Vail put Seth through a sharp questioning concerning Harmony. He went afterward to his wife.

"It seems a queer place," he said. "They are questioning God Himself and pushing in dangerous ways. But the young man says Friend Price is there from Cincinnati. Thee knows what a good man he is."

"Enoch," she answered, "thee is a man and has better judgment of what goes on in the world than I. But I should say that a town which has produced a young man like this one who is with us cannot be very far astray in evil."

Downright and large was Sarah Vail. Mary, her daughter, was slender. The cap above her forehead was always as pure as a flower, the kerchief crossed upon her bosom was exquisite of texture and at all hours snowy white. Out of her gentle face shone the light of generations of peace. The angels who love beauty must have wept when this type of Quaker woman vanished from the earth.

On the third morning Mary went into the spare room to find her charge lying wide awake with curly pate upon the pillow, her eyes alive again with an expression of ease. Mary set the breakfast tray and Miss Macleod pulled herself up carefully, favoring her foot. Then she seized Mary's hands and covered them with kisses. Miss Macleod was very Italian when she let herself go.

"Oh," she cried, "you are as beautiful as the day. There is a Madonna in the Pitti Gallery which Raphael painted in his pure youth. It is altogether like you."

"Thee must eat thy breakfast," said Mary. "In our manner of life we are not accustomed to receive such praise."

"And in my life I am not accustomed to receive such kindness. Oh, if you only knew how in our home we had to live in whispers. And at night would come the sudden knock at the door and the arrest — the only accusation being that we had spoken of liberty or helped some fellow-man to think and hope. It was of no crimes they accused us. They took my dear grandfather and they tried to get me to come and make some confession that would hurt him. But I was not a silly woman-of-tears to be their tool. And now he is gone — gone!"

"Where was all this?" asked Mary tenderly.

"In Naples. It is like that in Naples, since our Revolution failed and the King came back."

Mary stroked the curly head.

"I don't know why I told you that," said the foreign girl. "It is not safe to speak of, even here."

Then came a day when Mary summoned Seth into the living-room to view his lady seated in state, her foot upon a stool. He was newly shy at seeing her again. He seemed to have forgotten how she looked. In this strangeness all his little ease with her was gone, would have to be created over again.

Fresh friendships are often elusive in this way. But Seth, of course, did not know that. It was she, however, who did the talking until his foolish strangeness disappeared.

That morning Seth sat in the corner apparently labeling specimens, in reality listening to the chat of the two girls. Miss Macleod told of her Naples and its blue

and shining bay, of huge Vesuvius with its lazy smoke-scarf showing the changes of the wind and foretelling the weather. Mary worked at some sewing impossibly dainty and fine. Like all student-women Miss Macleod viewed such work with envy and said so.

"But thee can do something far better, I am sure of that," said Mary with adoring eyes. Mary came easily to her adorations.

"Yes," said Miss Macleod, "I can sing."

Seth bent over his specimens blushing scarlet. How could he have forgotten that ugly voice which he must now bring to Harmony for all to hear? In his disturbance he looked up, catching Miss Macleod's eye, but she went on speaking to Mary. "I will sing for you to-day," she said to her.

"No," said Mary, flushing. "Mother would not allow that. We Friends know that music is misleading. It may not be sinful, but it leads to sin."

"After all, Mary," said Miss Macleod with sudden constraint, "I think, perhaps, you would not like it, though I sing well. I am afraid I do not understand this American taste."

They lingered a week in the great wide house, where the peace reigning in the hearts of its dwellers seemed to pervade the very rooms, quieting all who came. But at last the injured foot was strong again. They could resume their journey. They had arranged to travel the rest of the way on horseback. Good-byes were said at the gate. Seth was unalloyedly happy to be on the way again, with its bright hours stretching ahead, its cantering horses, its journeying converse, now so gay, now falling into silences of friendly ease.

But shortly down the road Seth found that the basket with their dinner had been left behind. He turned back, left his horse at the gate, and came bounding in swift leaps to the door.

Mrs. Vail stood ready with the basket which she handed him. Then, perhaps because she had no son, perhaps because the starry deeps of youth spoke so radiantly from his face, she laid her hand upon his shoulder, and blessed him in strong, clear words. And Seth, feeling her benediction like a real power laid upon him, walked wonderingly away.

CHAPTER XL

SETH WAY'S NARRATIVE ONCE MORE

PORT AFTER STORMY SEAS

> Rest after toil, port after stormy seas,
> Peace after war, all these do greatly please.
> Spenser's *Faerie Queene.*

We rode one golden afternoon into Harmony. The gloom of the continuous forest was left behind and suddenly — we were there!

Above in the serene sky the swallows trailed their notes of slumber. The street with its low, quiet houses, the chimneys curling their smoke upon the air, the little log cabin at the corner which I had helped build, all were there as if I had been not an hour away. The peace, the unworldliness, of the town came over me like a familiar fragrance, a spiritual aroma which to this day always touches me in Harmony, and in no other place. I pushed my horse abreast of my companion.

"We are at home now," I told her.

"Yes," she said, "I feel that we are."

"Do you? Do you?" I queried like a pleased boy. "I feel at home down to the soles of my feet, as if the living roots of me had been put back into the old soil. And I hope you will feel so before long."

As we passed "No. 4," Phil Klepple recognized me.

"Hi, so ye got back!" he called.

I pulled up and he came out into the dusty street to welcome us.

"Why, howdy," he said, staring at my companion.

"Phil, this," I explained, "is our new music teacher, Miss Macleod — for the Educational Society, you know."

"Yes, I know. Somehow I suspicioned it was goin' to be a man. Well — no harm" (seeing my embarrassment). "Reckon women-folks is as smart as men-folks in this here new System."

The encounter broke my mood. "I will take you to the tavern now," I told her hastily. "I think I must see Mr. Maclure."

We passed several folk upon the way. André Dufour grinned in boyish surprise. Miss Sistaire gave us a bow, but I passed her without pausing. At the tavern, Robert Evans welcomed us cordially and his good wife soon conducted Miss Macleod to her room, while I hurried on toward the mansion school to find Mr. Maclure.

Now I was in for it — the explanations which I had so long dreaded. But as I hurried along the street, pausing only to greet a friend or receive a welcome, I realized that my dread had completely changed. It was no longer my own chagrin that mattered. It was hers — hers because she would sing. How in the interest of our companionship had I forgotten that voice of hers? What would Virginia Dupalais think of it, or Mrs. Neef, or the Owens, who so loved music and, alas, knew so much about it? If I could only induce her not to sing! She could teach. I was sure she could teach wonderfully well. Perhaps she was intending to do that only. But no, Miss Macleod was totally unaware of her defect; and who was I to refer to it? No, she unquestionably would sing. Then she would be ashamed before them all. I paused at the great gate in a cold perspiration. That voice, as belonging to Miss

Macleod, was a positive grief to me. Could she really be so fine as she seemed and yet sing like that? There must be some inner defect of spirit to match that conch-sound. Fleeing this conviction I hurried into the house. I opened Maclure's door.

He sat as I had left him by his great mahogany table, his auburn head bowed over a book. About him on the walls books in solid ranks rose to the ceiling. He did not note me till I stood beside him. Then how he sprang to his feet!

"Seth!" he cried, "I did not know you were here! Seth!"

He shook my hand, put both his hands upon my shoulders, searched my face. His eyes shone with a light that made tears come to my own. It was the truest welcome home I had ever received.

"Well," he said; "so now you are a city man. What have you to say for yourself?"

"Mr. Maclure, I know you will think me a fool, a —"

"Have n't I always thought that?" he smiled.

"But this time it will be truth. In New York" — I blushed scarlet — "oh, I played an awful fool in New York."

"Of course, of course!" He began to laugh at me.

"And — and the teacher is a woman."

"What teacher?"

"The one I brought with me."

"Dear me!" he stopped laughing and began to look sharply at me. "And you came together all this long way?"

"Mr. Garcia praised her," I hurried on, "and I could find no other teacher, though I searched everywhere. And — and I think you will like her, Mr. Maclure. I

know she can manage the chorus and even an orchestra, if you wish it."

"That's remarkable," said Maclure doubtfully.

"She has such a brilliant mind. She is interested in the Community and in natural sciences. She read me — well, almost all of Cuvier's volume on the fossil bones — on our way."

"Good Lord! And you just read Cuvier — all those thousand miles?"

"No, sometimes we talked. That's how I found out how — how brilliant she is."

"Yes, I see. And, of course, she sings like an angel."

"I did n't — well, I did n't hear her — except at a distance. I had to take what Mr. Garcia said."

"But you liked her singing," he pursued.

I saw I must face my guns. "No," I answered squarely; "I've tried to and I don't." That experience at Garcia's came vividly back to me as I spoke, and I flushed painfully.

"Dear me," he said again. "I can see you have tried. Yes, I can see you have tried."

He seemed troubled. He sat down and drummed on the table with his fingers. In a panic I realized that he might reject her altogether.

"She can't help it, my not liking her voice," I pleaded. "It's I who am to blame for that. I hope you will let her stay."

Presently he asked: "She is brilliant, you say? As brilliant, perhaps, as Madame Frétageot?"

"Oh, much more so," I cried youthfully.

"And about Madame's age?"

"But Madame Frétageot is very old!"

"Yes, I judge" (with a twinkle) "at least thirty. And your friend —?"

"She is nineteen."

"Nineteen!" he repeated thoughtfully. "Yes, I see."

He leaned back in his chair, clasping his kind hands behind his head, looking into my face. For some reason I found the look hard to meet.

"And why don't you ask *me* the news?" he said.

"About you?" I cried contritely.

"Well, about things in general. Geology — for instance. Are you interested in geology, these days?"

"Oh, Mr. Maclure!"

"Do you remember the paper you wrote last spring on 'The Old High Beach Lines along the Shores of Lake Michigan' — the one you published in Silliman's 'Journal'?"

"Yes," I said in sudden anxiety; "I have been worrying over my discussion of the ancient overflow. I don't think I fully verified some points."

Maclure reached for a letter which lay on his table.

"You foolish, foolish Seth!" he said as he slowly opened it. "Look at this." Then, before I could read it — "On the strength of that paper you have been elected to the Royal Society of London. This is from Sir Charles Lyell asking further about you — about you, sir. Do you realize what all this means?"

I saw his face waken with pleasure as it never did for any honor of his own.

"Do you realize," he demanded, "that this recognizes you before the world as a scholar? Before the *world*, sir."

My heart filled with gratitude, mostly for the joy I was giving him.

"It's all your doing —" I began.

"Tut, tut! You dare to say that! New York was to teach you better manners. Now," he added as he folded the letter preciously, "this brilliant creature of yours must come here to supper. We must make her welcome in her wilderness home. Go ask Robert-Dale to come, and David. Robert Owen himself is away in Philadelphia."

"May I bring little Columbine Neef?" I asked. "I can hardly wait until morning to see her."

He smiled. "I see you are still faithful to the little fairy. All right, bring her."

As I went down the porch steps, he ran out after me.

"Why not ask Lesueur and Troost, and one or two young ladies?" he said eagerly. "And, oh, Audubon the naturalist is here — at the Yellow Tavern."

"Audubon!" I echoed with delight.

"Yes, and there's a duke hanging around, a visitor — the Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach. Hunt him up. I'll tell the housekeeper."

As he turned back into the house, I noted with gratitude how young and swift was his step. I hurried across the street to the other school. Midway I met old Aunt Sammy in her lace sacque and sunbonnet. Aunt Sammy was a public benefactress, being one of the few who cheerfully accomplished the Community washing.

"Howdy, Seth Way," she cried gleefully. "I heard you brung a gal-perfesser. A pretty one, too, with blue eyes an' short hair! Limps a little o' one foot."

"Gracious!" I found breath to say. "How did you find out all that?"

"Find out! The hull town knows it by now."

Our new electrical contrivance would never have been needed in Harmony for the disseminating of news!

"But, Aunt Sammy," — I hesitated anxiously. "She is n't permanently lame. She only hurt her foot last week."

"All right," grinned Aunt Sammy. "I'll tell 'em."

I entered the house slightly perturbed, passed through the familiar classrooms, and upstairs to the Neef apartments. Mrs. Neef sat sewing by the open fire, and Columbine, her back to the door, was bending industriously over her lessons. I tiptoed in and clapped hands over her eyes.

"It's Cécile," she said. "Celia Noël."

"Have Celia's hands grown so big?"

"Oh, Sir George — Sir George!" she cried, leaping from her chair.

I caught her in my arms and kissed her quite as William Owen might have done.

"How did I endure to be away from you all this while?" I said.

"I dunno. But I cried one day to go walking with you."

"You shall walk with me to-morrow and we'll gather shells."

"Mr. Way, you spoil my little girl," said Mrs. Neef, rising to greet me.

Carlo Caprioli sprang up from nowhere to give me an elaborate embrace. Mr. Neef came in rubbing his hands.

"What's this — what's this, I hear! A new régime? The arts to be entirely given over to females? What chance have we rough old codgers now? The pupils will leave us in droves to sit at the feet of the beautiful rabbiness!"

"But, Mr. Neef —"

"And she speaks French I hear. Is she Parisienne?"

"No — Neapolitan, I think."

"Think! Don't you *know* after all this while? And how lovely the damsel will look, leading the town band!"

I hastily delivered my invitation to Columbine and beat a retreat. On the stair I met Mr. Lesueur.

"Ah, you sly rogue," he cried without greeting. "You, Seth Way — the bashful one! How did you ever persuade her, this paragon, this slice of the moon!"

I saw I was to run the gantlet of the town.

CHAPTER XLI

A COMMUNITY DINNER

At six o'clock I waited upon Miss Macleod at the tavern. She came out so refreshed that I knew not what to say. All these weeks I has seen her in dull travel-habit, and now this colorful, this dawn-like change! I must have stared, for she flushed a little.

"Is n't it good to find one's trunks and belongings again?"

"I did n't know you. I was used to the other, the traveling —" Then I guessed I should hardly say this — and stopped. Was she, indeed, a "slice of the moon," as Lesueur had styled her? Never had I thought her so. But in this rose-colored, floating garb, with the fine, free ringlets of her head filleted with a silver garland, she certainly looked it. Her dress was high-waisted, slender as was the fashion, and caught up at the border with real rosebuds — at least I thought them real. Beneath it her feet twinkled in cross-ribbon slippers. Had those feet really been so dainty — through all our rough walks and ways. Had her arms always been so fair as they glimmered now beneath her gauzy shawl.

I mentally measured the two days before Friday and our usual concert. She would, of course, not sing till then. Give her those two days and she would charm them all, and then it would not matter. As I walked beside her toward Maclure's, my heart grew wonderfully lighter. Truly it was a beautiful evening with the clear, warm air about us and the glow still golden in the west.

We entered Maclure's house, and what a company it was; what a company of familiar faces! How happily the dear voices filled the room with greetings and eager questions. Mr. Maclure at once came forward, saving me all introductions. I thought his face warmed as he looked at her. Robert-Dale began to converse with her and David-Dale. They were all there. Dinner was served in a separate building and we filed out thither in a joyous procession. Robert-Dale had my lady on his arm, and I saw them both talking eagerly. Columbine fell to my lot, and I was very content with her little hand.

At table Madame Frétageot presided as head of the school. Virginia Dupalais and Lucy Sistaire sat as usual beside her, and on her right was the august Duke of Weimar, who seemed to be studying us, face after face. I made no doubt he would put us all in his book of travels. Mr. and Mrs. Chapelsmith were Madame Frétageot's guests. I wondered if they still took the same solicitous charge of the weather.

Our fare consisted of two wild turkeys which Victor Duclos had shot that morning, and not so very much else. I thought I saw the Duke look over the board as though amused.

Lesueur and Gerard Troost had just returned from a scientific foot journey through Illinois and southern Missouri.

"We visited the lead and zinc mines at Galena, Illinois, and the iron formations at Pilot Knob and Iron Mountain," said Lesueur to me. "You should have been there. The deposits were finely exposed and would have afforded you splendid study."

"Oh," I cried, "why was n't I here to go with you! How I have been wasting my time these weeks!"

I glanced across the table and saw Miss Macleod's face flush with a curious hurt look. Now, why could not my tongue have been stricken dumb! I never could repair such a blunder, never! But a few moments later when I dared to look again, she was quite merry. Perhaps she had not really heard me, and how foolish was I to suppose she would be concerned for speech of mine.

Audubon leaned forward, his great brilliant eyes aglow, questioning Lesueur about a certain bird of Missouri.

"Is it true that in the treeless sections it nests upon the ground?"

"There, there, why did I not observe?" said Lesueur contritely. For in those days a naturalist felt it his duty to bring home some prize of fact or specimen to every friend, no matter what his specialty.

Now the waitress, one of our school-girls, brought in a steaming platter.

"This," said Madame Frétageot, "is a new Indian dish. Monsieur Lesueur brought the recipe from Missouri and Virginia made it. Now you must all try what good Indians you would make."

The dish went round. Robert-Dale pronounced it delicious. So also did Mrs. Chapelsmith, but as Mr. Chapelsmith reached to take his portion, we heard his spouse's clear tone: "I have tasted, John. That is sufficient!" And John actually dropped the spoon. Young André Dufour giggled outright and the rest of us were on the verge of laughter when David-Dale spoke.

"Mrs. Chapelsmith is right. That is a barbaric dish, fit only for barbarians. Oh, Miss Virginia, I beg your forgiveness! But I have here a dish that is an offspring of intellect, of intellect alone—"

"Vould not dat be rather dünn?" asked Mr. Troost.

"Thin? Oh, no. The intellect worked upon common ingredients — flour, water, and such. Polly, you have it there!"

At his word Polly the waitress set upon the table the sorriest loaf of bread I have ever seen, a shrunken, mummy-like thing.

"Now, Dale, where did you get hold of that?" cried Robert, jumping up in dismay.

"Behold!" exclaimed his brother, also rising. "Bread, but in a new guise. Bread as a genius makes it. This morning the cook at "No. 2" departed — left without a word. And my good brother Robert descends to the kitchen, dons the cook's apron, and evolves — this!"

Everybody broke into shouts of laughter, Robert heartiest of all. He drew his creation toward him.

"Nobody can say it is not substantial!" he protested, lifting it. "This is no such thing as dreams are made of!"

"Dreams would be made quick enough if one ate it," laughed Maclure.

"My mamma," broke in little Columbine, "she said that, anyway, Cousin Robert was willing. He put on the apron just like Mary, an' he worked so hard that the flour was 'ist evveywheres." She was a little troubled over Robert's status.

"Thank you, my dear Columbine," said Robert-Dale with a courtly bow. He had broken the heavy loaf of bread and was rolling pieces of it in his hands.

"Here now," he called, "never say that intellect cannot make the best of defeat. Who'll go gunning with me tomorrow? I have here bullets in plenty." And he held out the neat balls as leaden as one need wish.

"Well," said Lesueur, who had all the while been industriously eating the Indian stew, "I always thought I preferred barbarism to civilization. Now I know it. My congratulations, Virginia!"

Carlo Caprioli, who was also waiting upon the table, here leaned over my shoulder and whispered loudly: "She is n't Neapolitan. She is n't Italian at all."

"Hush, Carlo, for mercy's sake," I whispered. "You forget she understands Italian."

As the merriment over the cookery died down, Miss Macleod was saying to Robert-Dale: "Do you all work like that simply to help one another?"

"We are supposed to," said Robert, and a shadow of trouble crossed his face. "Each member is assigned some manual task."

"Then, I must work too."

"But you are not a member of the Community. You are a teacher, employed."

"That makes no difference." She nodded her head in her bright, decisive manner. "There must be work to do."

"There is, indeed."

"Then what shall be mine?"

"Listen, friends!" Robert called, tapping the table for attention. "Our charming guest says she wishes to work for the Community. What task shall we give her?"

There was a moment's silence.

"She could take Mary's place," suggested Columbine's high voice timidly.

"Oh, dear, no; I should make worse bread than Mr. Owen!" laughed my lady.

"If you were a man, there is much fall ploughing to be

done," said William Owen who had come in late from his own work.

"I wonder if I could n't plough," she cried, perfectly in earnest.

"The fields of fairyland and fertile thought," said Robert-Dale gallantly, "but never the rough acres of Posey County."

"There's the sweeping in the schools," suggested Madame Frétageot.

"And sewing."

"Or plaiting hats in the hat factory," said Lucy Sistaire.

To all of these my lady still shook her curly head.

"Can't I work out of doors?" she pleaded.

"There's the dairy. I work in the dairy," from Virginia Dupalais.

The Duke turned to her horrified.

"You — you, my fair lady, with those white, delicate hands?"

"But that is lovely!" cried Miss Macleod. "I'll work in the dairy. I'll begin to-morrow morning."

"And we'll all come to witness your first trial," cried David-Dale.

"That's early work," warned Lesueur. "You'll usher in the sunrise."

"It's terribly dirty work," said the dainty Virginia. "And the cows try either to kick you or lick the back of your neck."

"Yes, yes, that's what I want to do," declared my lady.

"All right," said William. "We'll set you down as dairymaid. You know ''t is dabbling in the dew makes the milkmaids so fair'!"

Our merry company filed back to the big house by the light of the rising moon. "It is lovely, idyllic!" I heard Miss Macleod exclaim under the shadowy trees. "Tell me about the Community. Mr. Way told me much, but there is so *very* much."

Some one touched my arm. I turned and saw Audubon's handsome face.

"Seth, I am so made happy with seeing you in this place," he said. At the tavern we had had but a moment for a swift greeting. "Before, when I see you, you are alone — quite without friends, you say, alone in the forest. But now — here! — beloved of many —!"

"But," I boasted, "you stood by me. Did n't I find you!"

"Yes, *mon Dieu*, did I not! And I would have taken you home to my Minna, to my dear Henry!"

"Indeed you would," I said gratefully, "I can't see how I managed to refuse."

"It was destiny!" responded Audubon with fervor.

We came back to the big drawing-room, the room of the Greek pictures, of the geological specimens and the books. It was already full of people. It was the custom of Harmony, then as now, for all to flock unbidden to see any new guest. Mr. and Mrs. Neef were there, Dr. Price and his young wife, my dear William Pelham, looking, I thought, a little pale and worn, yet full of interest in everything; Richard Owen, boyish and with cheeks shining from a long horseback ride up from Mount Vernon.

A big fire was crackling in the fireplace and sending a glow upon all the eager, thought-keen faces.

Maclure was deep in converse with Lesueur, who had

brought to the dinner-party some specimens of fish in alcohol. Of course he could not possibly have delayed showing them to his friend.

"But this is unusual — a very interesting form," Maclure was saying. "It's new. I'm sure it can never have been described."

"I am certain that it has not," said Lesueur happily.

Like children! Yes, we were like children in our fresh new-touching of the world, our new-discovering of Nature's wonders in Nature's new playground of America. How dull New York seemed in comparison to this! I inwardly vowed never to leave Harmony again, except to plunge as Lesueur had just done into the wilderness and bring back treasures for the town.

Best of all, how fully my lady fitted among us, how frankly all were admiring her. It was Gerard Troost who was now talking with her, the wrinkles at the corners of his eyes wrinkling their cheeriest smile. He, too, was recounting some adventure of the recent expedition.

"What was your especial research?" I heard her ask.

"Ah, it would not interest a lady — the study of the chemical properties of the various iron ores. Some of them are very complicated — difficult."

"But that *would* interest me," she protested. "Do you mind a little effort to explain? I do want to understand."

Robert-Dale came to my corner and took my arm.

"Seth, she is splendid, splendid!" he said. "Where did you ever come upon so interesting a girl? With that broad forehead and the chestnut curls and those fine chiseled features she's a very Antinous."

"Who was she?" I asked.

"Ah, Seth, read your Latin! *He* was the handsomest

youth in Rome. And she seems like a youth, somehow, a kind of young Greek god."

"But when you know her better, you realize how womanly she is," I protested. And suddenly the picture of the forest cabin and the baby on her knee floated before me. I was, indeed, rejoiced at her conquest of them all. Her way was assured!

Just here Mrs. Neef crossed the room and laid her hand on my lady's arm.

"Are we not to have the pleasure to hear you sing?" she asked in her pretty broken English. "We are all expecting much to hear you sing."

My heart thumped like a hammer. Then to my thankfulness she refused.

"Oh, I could n't sing," she laughed. "All day I have been on horseback in the dust."

"And yet we want to hear you," pleaded Mrs. Neef.

Robert-Dale hurried back to her. (Oh, if they only would leave her alone!)

"All the year long we hear nobody but each other," he said. "We are hungry for a new voice."

I hurriedly joined the throng. "She *is* tired," I blurted out. "The — the trip to-day was harder than usual, so rough, you know, and bad horses."

A curious look crossed her face. She almost seemed sorry for me.

"I can't sing without my harp," she said decisively. "I have n't seen it yet and all the strings must be broken. It will take a week to get it in order."

Josiah Warren had drawn near, his face full of expectation.

"I took the liberty of opening the harp a week ago

when it came, and have mended and restrung it," he said. "It is ready for your hand."

"What, you did that! How kind, how kind!"

"It is here," he added.

He led her to the far end of the room and took off the cover. The golden thing stood forth in the firelight, surely the loveliest implement man ever made or used.

"Oh," she cried, stepping to it, "how glad I am to be with it again!" She swept her hand across it in a joyous *arpeggio*. "Why, it is almost in tune," she said in soft content. Her right hand reached instinctively for the tuner and began the delicate work among the pegs.

"Miss Macleod," said David-Dale, "do you suppose we are going to wait until to-morrow?"

She bowed her head low over her task.

"No, for I will sing now.

She began to look in my direction.

"Mr. Way," she called, "will you take me to the tavern to fetch my music?"

I pushed toward her, awkwardly ready. I must have looked an unwilling swain.

"But if you are really singing," said William Owen the generous, "why not sing for everybody? The town is agog to hear you. Let us ring the bell."

"The bell!" she asked, amazed.

"The steeple bell to summon the town. Richard and I will carry your harp over to the hall."

"Oh, not that!" Almost I said this aloud.

But she laughed merrily. "Yes, yes. Ring your steeple bell!" she said.

CHAPTER XLII

AN OFFENDED GODDESS

ONCE in the street, we had not gone five paces together before I saw that I was in disgrace. She turned her face away and walked in silence. I was pained beyond all reason. I knew she expected me to disavow my implied criticism; but if I spoke at all, it must be to beg her not to sing to-night. To make matters worse the steeple bell began to ring loud and startling.

"Miss Macleod —" I began.

But she cut me short.

"I know what you are going to say. But I must sing. Do you not see that I must? They must all hear me sooner or later, however much you may dislike it."

I plunged deeper.

"But I hoped you would not do it so soon. After they know you better —"

"Know me better!" She stopped in the path. "Do you hate my voice that much — that much?"

"Don't say I hate it. But, Miss Macleod, believe me, it is not the least like anything else about you."

"But it is. It is like me!" (How deep was her tone in anger!) "It is part of me — my voice. My soul goes out upon it, and reveals me — yes, *me*. If you hate it, you hate *me*."

"Oh, don't say that, don't —" I began. But we had reached the tavern and she hurried in.

Her great traveling chest stood in the hallway, too

heavy to be carried abovestairs. She dived into its depths, brought forth books, bundles of written papers, music. One of the music-books she handed to me. I somehow dropped it, picked it up again, and when she handed me another, I dropped the two.

"Why, Mr. Way!" she exclaimed as I reached down again. "Your hand is trembling. What are you afraid of?"

It seemed incredible to me that any one could get up before them all like this and sing without preparation or fear. And all the while the steeple bell pealed and rang as if to call the dead.

"There are — there are so many people," I faltered.

"What of that?" she said sharply.

As we hurried along, the streets were already full of folk and the great hall was quite lighted up.

"It's the new young lady," I heard one woman saying. "The one Seth Way brought. She's going to sing."

My heart began to thump miserably and I found it necessary to swallow a great many times. As we entered the hall, she turned and spoke to me again. Her face was white and indignant.

"You must not come in! Do you suppose I could sing with you there? You have given me the first stage fright I ever knew!"

So I had only made matters worse. I walked away humiliated and anxious beyond words. But I could no more stay away than the hound who creeps back to howl to the sounding fiddle. The great lighted and open windows reached almost to the ground. I stood near one of them. In a moment I would again hear that raucous singing — *her* voice! O, the bitterness that it should be

hers. They would all dislike it, yet all would try to be kind. No, not all! I could think of some who would say cutting things and laugh behind her back. And after that Maclure could never give her the classes in charge.

The harp began a prelude, then came the voice, a scared and hollow sound, out of breath and not even firm as I had heard it before. It wavered off the key, then on a high note it broke — broke entirely. In the pause I could hear people clear their throats as if to help her.

"Never mind!" I heard her say pluckily; "I'll play first."

"The Harp that once through Tara's Halls" began very timidly. Everybody played that in those days. But it soon grew significant and clear and after the once playing broke into a maze of intricate variations, mounting to tiny bell-like harmonics or plunging to the deep tones of the harp, richer than any piano of those days. Suddenly at a questioning chord it stopped; and then upon the night air sprang in full surprise, full-winged, that same voice which I had heard at Garcia's — the beautiful, high imperial voice which had haunted me all these weeks. For a moment I could not believe what I heard. It was she — she who possessed it — Miss Macleod! I had made some stupid blunder, some crazy mistake. But it was she, it was she who housed that beauty of strong sound!

I clambered to the window ledge like a forbidden urchin. There she sat in the strong light, her eyes shining with conscious power, her swift hands sweeping the strings, her melody mastering the place. I was so happy that I forgot our absurd dispute. That became impossible as did all futile and petty things. I seemed in the

presence of some great heroism, as though moving among a thousand men marshaling to a splendid deed.

Then she ceased. I caught my breath. I saw Robert-Dale rush forward to congratulate her, Maclure, Madame Neef, Madame Frétageot, and the rest. The applause filled the place.

"*Encore! Encore!*" shouted Lesueur's voice.

She sang in Latin an *Ave Maria* by Arcadelt, ancient, broad, sincere; then the perfect "*Voi, che sapete,*" from "Figaro" (how well I know those now), then some lilting Scotch songs, "My Heart's in the Highlands," and "Jock o' Hazeldean," which made the Scottish Owens wipe furtive tears, being far from home. She was as full of song as a thrush in May. I wondered how she had managed to keep silence through all our weeks together. And I had spoken unjustly, cruelly to her. No wonder she had been amazed and angry. Suddenly I could hardly wait for her to finish, that I might tell her how it had happened, and have her laugh at me.

I hurried around into the hall. But she had just called Audubon to the stage.

"You are a musician," she was eagerly saying. "You spoke of music in a way that makes me know."

"I wish my flageolet were here," was his response.

"But we have a flageolet and a flute here in the hall," cried Warren the unfailing. "Which do you wish?"

Soon the famous naturalist was discoursing eloquent music to my dear lady's harp accompaniment. So spontaneously were concerts made in our Harmony Town. I have often heard them since, always as ready and almost always as fine. Were not the musicians there and the abundant willingness to give pleasure?

As they finished I pushed my way toward Miss Macleod. She saw me coming and there came over her face an expression so unfamiliar, so wide-eyed and cutting, that I stopped still. She was angry, indeed. Not easily would she understand. It would take a space of time. I could not speak to her casually here among the crowd. I waited painfully for the chance to take her home. But Robert-Dale escorted her at her request.

"To-morrow morning!" I heard them call after her. "Five o'clock is the milking hour, and we're all coming!"

Back at home I tried to avoid Maclure in the hall.

"But, Seth," he exclaimed, "whatever made you speak ill of a voice like that!"

"I made a mistake, an idiot mistake. Don't ask me anything about it — until to-morrow!" And I hurried off to my room.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE NEW MILKMAID

'T is dabbling in the dew
Makes the milkmaids so fair.

In the hour of amber sunrise we started out. I suppose a better-bred youth than I would not have joined the milking-party. But unhappy though I was, I could not stay away. I would take the chance — the first chance to set matters straight.

I found no chance whatever.

She came out of the tavern clad in a short dark frock with a flowered apron and white cap. I think she deliberately dressed the part. She was a charming milkmaid.

"How fresh and rosy!" said William. "One would think you had done nothing whatever for us last night."

"But I am never tired. Good-morning, Miss Sistaire. Good-morning, Miss Virginia. Oh, will they give me a milk-stool like that for my very own" — for Miss Dupalais carried hers.

"Avaunt, thou slave of Individual Property," cried Robert in mock scorn. "That milk-stool belongs to us all."

"'T was mine, 't is hers, and has been slave to thousands," quoted our Earl of Syke and Lord of the Isles.

I fell back in shyness to walk with Miss Sistaire. Never, not even at the beginning of our journey from New York, had I felt more strange, more distant with Miss Macleod, more powerless. One by one we let our-

selves through the stile into Church Street — a grassy, dewy street arched with locust trees and with meadows glimmering at its end. Our shadows stretched long before us as we walked. We met school-children marching in military order up the street, boys and girls alike.

"You let the girls march, too," said Miss Macleod in serious pleasure. "How well and strong they will be!"

As we cleared the town, William broke into song.

> "'T is dabbling in the dew
> Makes the milkmaids so fair."

The chorus instantly joined in parts, Miss Macleod's clear soprano giving it body and forward sweep. And so singing we marched through the meadows. Miss Virginia and Miss Macleod were the only dairymaids among us; the rest had come for the lark.

"An' what in Hivin's name," cried the dairy mistress at the door. "If they don't be comin' like a lot of play actors! Now, what kin I do with the likes o' thim?"

"We've brought you a new milkmaid, Mrs. Malone," said Robert-Dale with a bow.

The Irishwoman grinned. No one could be cross with homely Robert-Dale.

"Only wan! I thought by the noise of ye 't was a hundred."

"We've come along to teach her. William here is a P.M.M."

"An' what's thot?"

"Past-Master of Milking, Doctor of its Philosophy."

"Go 'long wid ye, I'll teach her meself," she declared. "Which of ye is it?"

Miss Macleod stepped into the cow-house.

"Well," said the mistress, looking her doubtfully up and down, "I s'pose ye'll do afther a while. But I'd niver take ye on if that good-fer-nothin' Liza had n't run off last week. It's no joke teachin' a new wan. There," she added, pointing the way, "the fourth cow up, the brindle wi' the white tail. She's the easiest milker."

"Why, is there a difference?" asked my lady, smiling.

"O' course. Don't ye s'pose cows has got dispositions like the rest o' us? That there Black Bet, she's the bold wan. Jump over any fince ye kin make. I've seen her wi' the weight o' tin quarts o' milk go over the fince like a deer. Thar now. Ye do be makin' me waste me time like the lave av' em. Go 'long. There be the pail. See what ye kin do." As Miss Macleod started off, she called: "Be keerful o' the second cow. She's a kicker!"

My lady advanced confidently enough. Miss Dupalais had already gone to her task and the musical ting-tang of her work could be heard in the stable. Farther away two farm-boys were taking their seats.

William set the stool for Miss Macleod and slapped the cow into the right position. My lady disappeared into the stall.

"There's something the matter with this cow," she said after a goodly interval. "I can't do a thing — not a thing!"

William repeated the instructions and she began again. Presently she came out flushed and with an empty pail. At sight of her rueful face, the party broke into inextinguishable laughter.

"But I can't do it," she said astonished. "I supposed it was easy, that anybody — Now, only think how I've

been looking down on milkmaids all my life. Why, they're to be respected — honored."

"See, see," called David-Dale, "how our System teaches humanity. It really does, you know," he added soberly. For all the Owen sons were in love with their father's dream.

"Nobody gets the trick the first morning," said his lordship of Skye. "Come, now, you've tried hard enough."

"No, you must all go away right now, every one of you!" she cried. "I can't learn with you all looking on. Mrs. Malone will teach me."

"Seriously, Miss Macleod," laughed William, "it can't be learned all at once."

"Yes, it can — it must. Go now. Please go."

She fluttered her hands at us as one might chase a flock of geese, and we, her retinue, laughing and protesting, retreated through the doorway and left her to her labors.

In all this time she had smiled at every one but me. That they should be her friends and not I seemed utterly unthinkable. Our long days upon the road, our early startings and late arrivals, our very weariness together had made her seem to belong to me. I told myself that such was not the case, that she was now a member of the town. Then I found myself sorry that they all liked her so well. Of course I was shocked at myself for this.

Now, with a quick revulsion, I wished to be alone. With this tragic misunderstanding hanging over my head, how could I laugh and chatter or be at ease!

"Seth," asked the kind Lucy Sistaire "are you well this morning? You don't seem quite yourself."

"A touch of chills, I guess." Chills was the standing complaint in Harmony.

"Don't let them get hold of you," she admonished me. "We all laugh at chills; but they're really not to be laughed at. Take your quinine before they get hold of you."

"What have you been doing while I have been gone?" I asked, anxious to change the subject.

"Would you like to know?" she said, her face suddenly shining. "Wait; I will show you."

We had reached the mansion school. My botany class, with cans and nets, were waiting on the porch for the morning expedition. I let them wait while Lucy hurried into the house and presently came out with her dainty portfolio. She opened it shyly. There upon the paper was the exquisite form of the *Tellina tenera* shell, so painted with the hue and pearly iridescence of the original that it seemed the very spirit of the shell there upon the page. It was done precisely and to scale.

"But this is wonderful!" I cried. My misery for the moment took flight, so great was this pleasure.

"It is the one you found and named last summer," she said.

"You need not tell me that. Any one would recognize it. Gracious, how futile my description seems in comparison with this!" I leaned close over it in delight.

"But," she hesitated, "if the description and the picture were together — side by side —"

"What a fine suggestion!" I cried. "Lucy, let's do it. I'll give you the shells as soon as I come back from my botany class. You won't mind if some of them are very sober and small?"

"They all have their beauty," she responded.

Here Columbine came in with her new twinkling botany can and her broad hat.

"We are all waiting, Sir George," she announced. "An' I think some of us are — a little bit mad."

CHAPTER XLIV

IN THE SPRING-HOUSE

Out in the field, despite the sunshine and the eager questions of my youngsters, my cold anxiety once more clapped heavily upon me. I could hardly give clear answers or descriptions of the specimens which the children laid before me. It was with a sigh of relief that I brought them back to school at the end of our period. The hour following the botany class was my own for purposes of private study. I almost ran down Church Street and out toward the dairy meadows. Just now my private studies lay in that direction.

My lady stood just within the dairy door. Her face was flushed like a rose, and her curls damp upon her forehead. If she had been pretty last evening, she was doubly beautiful now. She was speaking to Mrs. Malone.

"I've done it. Look!" she cried. She held up her pail which was actually half full of the white foam. Then she saw me and her face instantly sobered.

"Well," sighed Mrs. Malone, "ye're that persistent. Who'd ever think o' learnin' to milk in wan day! If Brindle wuz n't a very Job among cows, she niver 'ave stood ye. Howiver, I'm thinkin' she'll weep whin she sees ye comin' ag'in to-morrow mornin'."

I put out my hand to the pail.

"Let me carry it to the spring-house, please," I said.

She shook her head.

"Why should everybody wait upon me?" she an-

swered independently. "I'm perfectly able to do my own work."

"I wish to carry it," I said quietly.

Quite suddenly she surrendered it to my hand and we went out into the sunshine.

"I want to explain," I began trembling.

"But don't explain," she interrupted me in so hurt a tone that I was in despair. "Please don't try to like my voice when you do not like it. I must n't be silly about it. I suppose I was piqued. Doubtless I've been too much praised."

"But," I stopped her, "it was n't yours — not your voice at all! I was all mixed up on that. I was stupidly, inexcusably mistaken! It was an insult to you that I could think, could even conceive, that it might be your voice!"

I began to talk very fast and the milk slip-slapped dangerously over the verge of the pail.

"Not my voice? What are you talking about?"

"You see, I never heard you — except from the next room, Garcia's anteroom. There were two of you singing and I thought — I thought that the other voice was — yours!"

"What other?"

"Good gracious, I don't know! The woman was dark. She had a mustache. She sang— like a man."

"Not Madame Bonci! But she is *very* famous. She sings the deepest parts."

We had reached the spring-house. I set the pail down on the cool stones.

"Her voice is an outrage!" I cried indignantly. "It's — it's an offense, a horror!"

"Then, why did you think it was mine?"

(Merciful Heaven! Was it possible to explain such a thing as this!)

"You — you see I heard you speak — right afterward — when you all came out together. She did n't open her lips. And — and— well, you speak unusually deep. So I thought the deep singing must be yours, too. And even then — I don't know why — but it nearly killed me to think that!"

"Don't you know," she asked, puzzled, "how all vocal work drives the speaking voice down?"

"No."

"But — oh, *mon Dieu!*" (The light broke on her suddenly) "Was that the voice you thought you had brought to Harmony?"

I nodded.

Her laughter filled the shadowy place. "Oh," she cried, "no wonder you tried to keep me still — no wonder —"

Her laughing eyes met mine. More persons than myself have marveled at those eyes. They were bright, and had a most disconcerting way of speaking beyond her speech-of-lips. "You comical man!" she cried. "I never know what desperate, impossible thing you'll bring forth next!"

I think I stepped nearer. "But even so, don't be angry with me again," I said seriously. "It hurts me more than it should, somehow, and — and you must just understand once for all that I can never think anything of you but — but —"

I stopped. I could not speak out what I felt about her — this rich, strange joy. Now that that blemish of voice had passed, a cloud seemed to have lifted, leaving her utterly lovely and fair.

She sobered at my soberness. "No," she said gently, "I ought never to be angry with you. Nobody ought ever to be angry with you, Mr. Way."

I lifted the pail and with unsteady hands filled the bowls in the spring trough. The stone walls about us were dim and cool in this hour of noon. The place was vocal with the trickling murmur of the spring. We washed the pail and carried it back to Mrs. Malone. Then we walked home together through the brilliant noonday meadows.

"Do you realize," I said, startled at the fact, "that I don't even know your name. Your first name, I mean. We all call each other that way here in Harmony."

"Are you sure?" she put me off.

"Haven't you noticed?"

"But my name is so long. It would take all the time of the Community to say it."

"I'd like to know," I persisted. I forgot that I had once told her her name was assumed.

"Well, hold up your fingers to count," she laughed. "First — Jessonda."

"Jessonda," I repeated entirely to myself.

"Lucrezia —

"Maria —

"John the Baptist —"

"But that's a man's name."

"I was born on his day and my dear, pious mother wanted to put me under his protection."

"Macleod!" she finished. "That's what comes of having an Italian mother and a Scottish father."

But I was saying them over.

"Can 'Lucrezia' be shortened into 'Lucy'?" I asked, business-like.

"Not correctly."

"Nevertheless I think our young folk will call you that. But I shall call you 'Jessonda' because it is a strange and beautiful name."

"But how if I —" she began, then let the matter pass.

"Sometimes," I added dreamily, "I shall call you 'John the Baptist.' He was a valiant saint and your mother did well to name you for him."

She rather sharply summoned me back to earth.

"Do you know what I shall do to-night?"

"Sing again, I hope."

"No, I shall sign for the Community. I want to belong to it. I can't bear to be so near the high adventure and yet not be a part of it."

"But," — I was loath to dissuade her, yet conceived that I ought, — "you will forfeit your salary, you know."

"I don't care for that."

"And —" I stopped.

"And —what?" she asked.

"Well — you don't mind my knowing that you have n't any money at all." (How delightful to counsel her!) "You might like to buy a few things first."

"What should I buy? I will be housed and fed. I have many books, and as for clothes —"

"Oh," I cried, "you have the prettiest dresses in the world."

She laughed at me again. I grew deeply content.

"I have wanted you to be a Harmonite," I said earnestly. "I have wanted you to be out of the vexatious world."

We parted at the Church Street stile, she going on

toward the tavern and I to the mansion school. At the door Maclure met me.

"Son," he said seriously, "did you forget your appointment with Lucy Sistaire? You can't afford to keep young ladies waiting like that."

I stopped in consternation. Had I managed to offend two damsels in one day? In the drawing-room I found her.

"Lucy!" I pleaded, "Lucy, I don't know how I did it! How could I forget! Don't be angry with me — don't!"

"Why, Seth, how could I be angry over — that?" said the quiet girl. "Everybody forgets here in Harmony, and I, too, sometimes. I've been looking over the Zodiac pictures and having a beautiful time."

I breathed relief and went to fetch my shells.

A half-hour later Maclure came upon us.

"What are you two concocting so busily?" he asked.

"Look!" I cried happily, handing him the picture. "Did you ever see so exquisite a painting of a shell? And Lucy will do the old fossil forms, too, and compare them with the present forms in the same picture. Then I shall write out my descriptions alongside."

"And what will you make of it," asked Maclure "when you have done it?"

"A portfolio, I suppose," said Lucy smiling.

"Nothing of the kind!" declared Maclure. "It shall be a book. Seth, I am astonished that you did not see the value of such a combination. We'll publish it," he added, warming with the plan. "'The Harmony Press' could n't be better employed than in such printing. Tiebout is here to lithograph your drawings, Lucy. Then

the copies will come back to you for coloring. Seth, I can hardly wait for you to get to work!"

"You shall not wait," I told him enthusiastically. "I will begin this afternoon."

CHAPTER XLV

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

I. PROBLEMS

THAT night I lectured in the great hall upon the fossils at the Falls of the Ohio. David-Dale and I alternated each week in lectures on geology. At the close of the lecture, Jessonda came upon the platform, and gave the audience her impressions of the Community and declared with her sweet decisiveness her wish to sign the Constitution.

"Most women could have done it without making a speech," I overheard one matron comment. But when Jessonda wrote her name in the book, the people broke into applause.

"Now," said William Owen, "Miss Macleod is to be voted upon in two weekly meetings. I hope for a good attendance at both."

McDonald of Skye sprang to his feet. He was a headlong Highlander.

"What's the use of two votings?" he protested. "We all know we want Miss Macleod. Let's take her in now!"

"Yes — yes," cried all the younger members.

"No — follow the Constitution!" shouted others. "What's the use of a Constitution if we don't keep to it?"

William, with some trouble, restored order.

At the close of the meeting, Mrs. Chapelsmith approached Jessonda and, in her most solemn manner,

invited her to make her home under the Chapelsmith roof.

"It is not proper for a young female to live at the tavern," she declared. "John thinks so. Now that you are a Communist you shall live with us. We shall expect you in the morning."

She sailed out amid general amaze.

"What a change of heart," murmured Maclure. "The Chapelsmiths have kept aloof from everything."

As I left Jessonda at the tavern, I met William Owen and we walked together.

"Father is returning the last of this week," he told me. "I am afraid he ought never to have gone away."

"Why?" I asked easily. "Has anything come up while I have been away?"

"Everything has come up. As soon as father's back was turned, a lot of our mechanics got confused somehow with the intricacies of our Community government. I must confess it is too complicated. These mechanics met without my knowledge and abolished all their officers except three, which they have dubbed 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.' Poh! What stupid blasphemy!"

"But surely such a thing can be stopped," I interposed.

"Yes, I have already stopped it. But, Seth," he asked, facing me, "do you like that man Mailor?"

"The new man who is managing the Community store? No, I have seen him very ill-mannered with the simpler people, and that is all wrong under The Principles."

"It's not so much that. He has a shifty eye and I don't trust him. But father does, father does! Then there are the school-children. Of course our methods are un-

usually free. People are criticizing us for that and saying that the children are wild and ungoverned. Do you think they are?"

"Not a bit," I declared. "It seems to me that the schools are developing splendidly. Indeed, everything in the town as I come back to it now seems good — only good! Oh, William, you ought to go away and see the world again. Then you could appreciate Harmony's perfections."

"That's it," he answered eagerly. "I believe I'm tired. To tell the truth, all the wrangling comes to me as director of the work. Good Lord, Seth, why are people so mortally afraid of work — of every little finger-turn beyond their appointed task! Of course affairs cannot always go as we plan. And when they do get tangled, I wish the good folk were less concerned for personal convenience and more interested in the general outcome of our experiment. I tell you, Seth, it did my heart good to see your Miss Macleod take up her share so willingly. How dead in earnest she was — would n't stand our making a play of it!"

"Yes, she's always like that," said I, with a touch of proprietorship.

He stopped in the walk. "She is magnificent!" he said with the Owen enthusiasm. "Do you know, old fellow, when Maclure sent you East I thought he was foolish to give you such a responsibility. I thought — well, to be frank, I thought you'd get finely fooled. And here you fetch back this most extraordinary genius. How did you come to think of getting a woman? And how did you ever hit upon her?"

I laughed in a sudden access of happiness. "Oh, I

did n't find her," I declared. "The gods were kind to me — just kind. They thrust her into my hands!"

Robert Owen did return from Philadelphia the following Saturday, and a Community meeting was immediately called.

As business progressed, I saw that the trouble had gone deeper than William had let me know. The mechanics, not of one but of many departments, complained that the complicated arrangements interfered with their work. Owen took up the matter with a masterly hand. He was the most successful manager of industry in Scotland. One difficulty after another he cleared with wise and kindly control. His knowledge and his purpose to deal justly were manifest in all that he did.

Then the farmers announced that they had withdrawn all their children from the schools. They did n't believe in "play-actin' for study and lettin' the young uns fergit the fear of God." Robert Owen showed great concern over their criticism, for the schools were his chief interest and his chief reliance. He promised to take charge of them himself until they should be running smooth and fair. Upon this the farmers consented to send their children back again.

Then Mr. Jennings, a teacher, announced that he could not teach older boys without flogging them.

"Thet's so! Thet's so!" from the farmer fathers.

"But we cannot use the rod in our schools," said Robert Owen.

"The boys are used to it. They won't obey without the rod."

"That is the pity of it. Yet even those who have been used to whipping will respond to kindness."

"They won't to mine," said Jennings doggedly.

Here Robert-Dale sprang to his feet.

"If Mr. Jennings would allow me, I'd like to try those boys. If he would consent to a holiday —"

"I'll consent quick enough," responded Jennings. "Try them yourself and you'll soon find out."

As the meeting broke up, I saw Jessonda talking with Robert-Dale. I supposed they were discussing the new kindly teaching. But as I neared them I heard him saying:

"You have n't seen the labyrinth! Let me take you to it to-morrow. It is a charming walk."

"At what time?"

"Oh, early. What do you say to six o'clock? That's about sunrise."

"You forget my chores," she laughed.

"But to-morrow is Sunday."

"My cows don't recognize the Holy Day. No, we'll go at eight, right after breakfast."

Again, to my chagrin, I found myself entertaining most unethical regrets for the friendships she was making. I had hoped myself to show her that labyrinth.

I walked back in moody discomfort to the mansion school.

Next day it was Columbine whom I took for a long walk among the hills.

CHAPTER XLVI

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

II. ROBERT-DALE TRIES SCHOOL-TEACHING AND JESSONDA KEEPS A PROMISE

ROBERT-DALE was so enthusiastic over the subjects which he taught that the dullest youngsters could not but catch something of his fire. His classroom was next to mine and I had often to pass through it. But one afternoon he was bringing them back from a swim in the Wabash. I heard their clumping shoes in the hall, but no chattering voices. Something was wrong.

"Boys," I heard Robert-Dale say, "I thought when we went to bathe I told you that you were to stay in fifteen minutes. That's the doctor's order, not mine; an order for your health and safety."

The boys all looked at one great fellow in a corner seat. It was evident that Ben had been overtempted. The boys were smiling but awed, the nervous tension was high.

"I want to take you in for swimming lessons a number of times before cold weather. But you can stay in only fifteen minutes. Now, what shall we do with fellows like Ben?"

The boys ceased to grin.

"Has no one a plan?"

"I guess you'll have to thrash him," suggested Peter Duclos.

"I don't like to do that. I never was flogged myself and I never flogged anybody. It must be an unpleasant thing to do."

"There's a closet in the attic," said a little boy.

"That would be better than flogging," asserted Robert-Dale. "Is the closet dark?"

"Yes."

"Perhaps Ben would n't like being shut up in the dark for nearly an hour while we go swimming."

"But we don't like to be cheated out of our swim, either."

"No. It's quite difficult, is n't it?" Robert-Dale sat waiting, his blue eyes resting seriously upon them, his fingers drumming softly on his book.

Achille Frétageot held up his hand.

"Please, Mr. Owen, would it do to leave him in the playground?"

"If he'd stay there. But he might go off swimming by himself and perhaps stay in an hour!"

Ben had looked restlessly from one to the other as they discussed his case. Now he burst out: "Mr. Owen, if you leave me in the playground, I won't budge. You 'll see I won't."

"All right, Ben. I've heard that you are a boy of your word."

There was a great break-up of anxiety and a moving of heavy feet.

Next day as I came out from my botany hour I saw Ben, sure enough, sitting steadfast in the corner of the playground. He was rattling marbles in his pocket, but some fine, inner sense of justice forbade him to play during his hour. The sight strangely touched me. It seemed to reach out from the trivial, boyish perversity to the serious sins of humankind and to reveal the secret of their cure.

That evening I told Robert of it.

"Yes," he said, "the kindly way seems loose and ineffective. But it is the genuine way. Men have been trying to force a door when all the while the right key will quietly open it."

"I am glad you are opening it, Robert," I said devoutly.

"By the way," he said as we parted, "I hope you're going horseback riding to-morrow — a party of twenty."

My heart sank. I had asked Jessonda to walk with me to-morrow morning. I had been looking forward to it not a little. Since our return I had had almost no hours alone with her. Robert-Dale had taken her through the labyrinth, William had shown her the town industries, David-Dale had had her rowing up the Wabash, and Virginia and Lucy, under the tutelage of Mr. Neef, were teaching her to swim.

But I sought her out.

"I suppose you know of the riding-party to-morrow," I said.

"Yes, I excused myself, of course."

"On account of our walk? But you must n't do that," I said heroically.

"I don't break promises," she replied.

"But," I hesitated, "I won't hold you to it. I think — in fact, I am sure that the riding is in your honor."

She looked down, fingering her dress. It was almost a childlike gesture.

"I have always liked walking best," she said. "But if you prefer to ride —"

"Oh, no, indeed!" I cried. "I want to talk with you. I have wanted it very much."

I went away wondering how Jessonda could so have mistaken my wish in the matter.

CHAPTER XLVII

TOM PAINE'S BIRTHDAY

NEXT day I waited at Mrs. Chapelsmith's gate and Jessonda came to meet me down the little path. The joy of the morning sunshine was on her face. We swung into step and started down the street.

"It seems," she said, "as though we were on our long journey again."

"Do you think of that, too?" I asked in surprise. "I miss those days. Now that they are over, their hardships have all faded. I can remember only the good rides, and the forest, and the little cabins we came to there and the views of the river."

"The wander-spirit is easily acquired. I miss those things, too," she answered frankly.

"Do you?" I said again. These mutual memories were astonishingly delightful. They made my own musings seem fine and right.

She wore the Community costume. I must confess that it was a trousered affair with a long full coat, for in Harmony we were trying out many notions. It was homely. Not even Lucy Sistaire looked well in it. But Jessonda's garment was of some rich, strange color, or perhaps her very wearing of it made it suggest the fair Scheherazade.

"But those slippers," I said critically. "Surely you cannot walk in those dancing-things."

"My stout shoes fell off my feet at our journey's end. I have only the Paris ones now."

"Those wee things — all the way from Paris!" I marveled. "From the Paris of Cuvier and La Place! What are they good for here?"

"Then I must go back," she concluded.

"No — no," I cried, stretching my arms across the path. "I can lift you over the rough places."

"As if I would let you!" with a toss of her boyish head.

We were clear of the town and the ropewalk and now turned suddenly into the wood-lane. The weather had sharpened into autumn. Last night the completing spirit had come and the forest was a very chorus of color: scarlet shouting to the morning sun, amber, high and clear, and a full diapason of strong gold upholding all the rest. As we went forward into the golden avenues, the very air was of that color-of-joy. I heard Jessonda catch her breath with delight very much as little Columbine might have done.

"Oh, I did n't know it was like this," she whispered.

"Like this?" I questioned.

"There is no such autumn in Europe, and no book really told!"

Beneath our feet the leaves were a golden carpet, though above, the trees showed no impoverished branch. Full and rich were these trees, these mosques and domes of silence. We moved in a hidden world of gold.

"There was a frost last night," I said. "That did it."

"Only a frost which made that maple a living flame?" she said in subdued wonder.

And suddenly through her fancy the frost seemed to me a mysterious, heavenly person. "Yes," I said. "I suppose it moves at night through the world of woods,

touching some trees with glory and leaving others to the dull habit of death. How strange it does n't touch them all. Look at that beech. It seems almost aware of its own splendor."

These were curious words for a sober scientist — the unhumbled scientist of that older day. Yet this feeling seemed always to have hovered above me, though till now too dim for words.

We stopped by a stream. I made a cup of leaves that she might drink and she marveled at my homely skill. A dove on the branch above us gave forth her stuttering announcement and then her sonorous call. She was answered from afar by some fluting spirit of her own ilk. Yet she did not go away; but called again and again through our low-toned conversation.

Here in the glen was an odor so full of wood-meanings as to be like thought itself.

"What is it," she asked, "this scent that meets us at every dip of the hills?"

"Only the depth of things," I responded, "and the infinite ferns."

We climbed the so-called Indian Mound, an extended slope with an ancient mound upon it which Lesueur had opened, finding Indian treasures. Our way up lay through the vineyards. Once upon the ridge we could look down a little vale, a veritable jungle of wild grapevines and cottonwood trees, and could see the Wabash wending its lordly way to the Old Dam and the mill.

Here we came upon a splendid stag with his herd of deer. At sight of us he lifted his antlered head, kinglike and responsible. Then he leaped away, he and his fleet retinue, down the dale and up the farther slope, so swift

that they pulsed and vanished small before our eyes. I had never felt how beautiful they were.

"I used to shoot them," I confessed. "But I take no pleasure in it now that I have learned the richer hunting in the woods. But catamounts are good hunting and so are bears."

"You have always lived in the woods," she said, musing. "I cannot tell you how strange that seems to me — like a fairy-tale."

"It was no fairy-tale at first," I said. And I told her of my forest days, of hairbreadth escapes on long hunting tramps; I told her even of my loneliness, how Maclure had come, and how the first knowledge which I had got from him had been like the break of an unimaginable day. She listened with eyes ashine and parted lips. It was possible to tell her such thoughts as I had not been able to speak even to Maclure.

We crossed Walnut Ridge and came down again into Indian Battle-Ground. Here were cornfields. She climbed the fence in her pretty trousers and I helped her from the height. As I did so there fell from her bosom a locket on its silver chain. I saw a man's face upon it, though it whirled and she thrust it quickly into her dress. In the midst of our quiet gladness the act stung me like a blow. I trudged forward with my hands in my pockets quite unable to talk with her.

And this was her lover, the one she had mentioned long ago, the one who had been unkind. I had almost forgotten him, but if she kept his picture there — I had not cared the least when she told me about him, but I cared bitterly now, and my caring dazed and puzzled me. I heard her footstep behind me, felt her touch upon my arm.

"Don't be angry with me, Seth," said her wonderful voice. "Not now — not in this place!"

"I'm not angry," I managed to say.

"This is my beloved. I will show you his picture. I have wished to show you before, but some one was always near."

She had already laid her treasure in my hand. It was the slender face of an old man, beautiful, sensitive, with white hair falling to the shoulders.

"But he is old, terribly old!" My voice was almost tearful.

"Not too old to be my grandfather," was her return, and her eyes danced, meeting mine.

"But you called him your —"

"Yes, yes. I always call him my beloved. He is dearer to me than any one in the whole world," she said defiantly. "And now I am going to tell you about him. That is your punishment — to listen to a long, long story."

"Will it be of you?" I asked. For something told me that, even as I had talked my heart out to her, she was about to talk to me.

"Yes," she said softly. "I have wanted you to know these things. It is lonely when no one knows."

My heart beat strongly as I sat down beside her. It was no little matter to be on the verge of a knowledge that had teased me for two whole months.

The picture lay in my hand. "He looks like you," I said.

"Yes, we are of one spirit as well as of one blood, my only kinsman."

There was something inexpressibly sad in her voice as she said this. I started to speak, but she read my thought.

"No, no," she cried; "don't ask me if he is dead. He is n't dead. He is in Italy."

She threw back her head as if to shake off some memory of him. Then she clasped her hands about her knees in the narrator's attitude.

"You see," she said, "I am a good bit Scotch."

"You! You are not Scotch at all."

"What, then?"

I gazed at her in delight. Could one fix nationality upon this strange spirit that was she?

"Yes, I am Scotch," she asserted. "My father was an Edinburgh sea-captain — of the deep sea. He sailed to Constantinople, and afterwards to India. Naples was at one time his port of call. And there he met my mother and married her. That was the only romantic thing he ever did, except, perhaps, when he named me Jessonda after the poor little Hindoo heroine.

"He brought my mother, Italian as she was, to his cold, forbidding Scotland. I can just remember the happy time when she was there, and how she stopped to kiss me as she went about her work, and how she sang me to sleep every night. Then she died and I was put with my strict cousins in Edinburgh.

"I was very unhappy there, for everything I said or did was curiously wrong in their eyes. As for father, he was always on the sea. I remember his coming only three times in that long, lonely period — a tall, sunburnt father who said few words. Each time I hoped against hope that he would take me on his knee, and say something, I hardly knew what. But he never did. My heart would ache for days after he would go away."

The mature Jessonda faded from before me. I was

seeing instead the wistful child she had been. I think she saw this in my face, for she added hastily:

"I tell you all this only to show you what dear grandfather meant to me afterward. Father was lost at sea and word came from grandfather that I was to go to him in Italy.

"Oh," she cried, moving her hands restlessly, "I shall never forget that meeting, not if everything else is washed out of my mind. Grandfather came late to the ship and I stood waiting among my luggage. I was ten years old. I did not cry, for I never allowed myself that, but my heart sank down into the abyss of loneliness that people feel when they die.

"Then there was a step behind me. Grandfather turned me about by the shoulders, crying, 'Sonda — my little Sonda!' He kissed me, then he looked at me, then he kissed me again. I could not understand what he was saying, but I knew he was taking me for my mother and that he had loved her best of anything in the world. All the way home he held my hand, sometimes drawing it nearer to him, sometimes stopping to look at me, laughing softly. And when we reached home he took off my cape and hat and laid his two trembling hands on my hair. Old Lucia came in with my supper; but he took it from her, setting it before me himself and begging me to eat. I could n't eat. I was too happy. That night I awoke to find him kneeling by my bed with his arms about me.

"He at once bought me a harp and began teaching me to play, grieving over the time I had lost. I soon learned to speak his Italian. When I began to sing, grandfather's joy was lovely to see. He could not by any stretch think I resembled my mother, but my voice was hers. The

sound of it through our house at Naples used to bring him to tears. Often when I have been singing I have found grandfather there in the room. He had been there, oh, perhaps half an hour, so still that I did not know it."

At this memory pure tenderness sprang into her eyes.

"Grandfather changed my name from Macleod to Di Baia, his own name. I was his own child, he said."

(I blushed as I recalled that cold morning in Brownsville when I had accused her concerning her name. What a fool I had been!)

"We had a case of forbidden books," she went on. "Grandfather took me to it when I was yet a little girl. It was in a secret closet. When I read there I had to lock myself into the closet and read under a little skylight. Had we been discovered, these books were enough to bring us to our death."

"What were they?" I asked.

"Oh, books of history, — true history, not garbled, — books of science and of the liberties of the world, a 'Life' of your George Washington was one. We also held secret meetings in our house. They were supposed to be for choral practice. Some of us would sing while others talked and planned. When I was only fourteen, I many times sang that Arcadelt '*Ave*' as a cover for their talk. Grandfather told me the secrets of the society as if I were grown up. They were plans" (even in this Indiana woods she dropped her voice) — "plans for a revolution to free us from Austria and the Neapolitan King.

"Then one terrible night the gendarmes raided our house and dragged grandfather away."

She snatched the picture from me as if it were too precious to leave a moment out of her own hands.

"Oh, they were so rough with him. His fineness and sweetness were nothing to them. While they were handling him he turned to bless me with his eyes as one does at death. For he thought we should never meet again."

She shuddered and hid her face. I felt that this was but the borderland of some deeper trouble. Would she tell me the rest, trust it to me? Yet I dared not push her to further speech and memory.

"But he came back," I gently reminded her; "you have told me he is in Italy."

"Yes, *grâce à Dieu*, yes! — through his courage and his wit. First came his secret message. How he ever got it to me I cannot see. I went as he directed to Florence where we were unknown. And there one evening in the little house in Fiesole, when I was reading all alone, suddenly his own hand pushed the book down and he caught me in his arms. It was the dead come back! He was precious in his coming as only those who come from the dead can be!"

Her head went down upon her knee, and without warning she gave way to passionate tears. But I saw that they were tears of bitterness and not of the joy which she had just been telling me.

"Jessonda, dear Jessonda! Why, what is the matter? Tell me!" I cried. Almost I had my arms about her. But she sprang up quickly shaking the tears out of her eyes.

"No, that is all, that is all," she declared. "Do not tell the others about my beloved," she begged. "I wanted you to know. Now I can speak of him to you and you will know him."

"Yes, and speak of him often, I think that is best. It

is the silence which keeps you upwrought. I don't want you to cry like that," I added huskily.

She looked at me and her eyes deepened with a loveliness which I am sure she did not mean me to see.

"You are good!" she said quickly. "You are good in all your ways."

We went back in silence by the old Rappite road and the woods. Words were needless in the deep comradeship which grew between us.

Even in its prosy ending this day was sweet. We reached home long after the midday meal and too early for supper. The austere Mrs. Chapelsmith had us out to her back porch and gave us some English cheese and a huge loaf of bread. We were ravenously hungry.

"Four ounces and two gills weight for meals are sufficient to sustain life for a day," she said, looking at us doubtfully. "John and I have proved that."

"But we've eaten twice that much already!" exclaimed Jessonda.

"Never mind, this time," said Mrs. Chapelsmith with unheard-of relenting. "It's lucky for you it is Tom Paine's birthday. You'd have been fine and late for your classes!"

The anniversary of the birth of Tom Paine, the freethinker, was kept as a holiday in the town.

"But we knew that when we went out," I protested.

"You two know nothing but the moment," she said stoutly. "In your present state of mind all days are holidays, I'm thinking!"

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE VOICE IN THE WINDOW

Jessonda threw herself into the Community life with unexampled ardor. I think I may safely say that she and Frances Wright and Madame Frétageot were the only women who went into it with whole-hearted aggressiveness. Madame Neef was absorbed in her infant school — business enough for one person. As for the other women, I think they secretly scoffed at this troublesome dream of their spouses and took the thorns of the new way with little grace.

But Jessonda, coming from the cruel coercion of the Two Sicilies to this free little town of the Wilderness, was filled with naïve hope. "Onward!" "Onward!" you could almost sense that word in her walk and in the look of her startling eyes.

It was Jessonda who changed the hour of the evening meetings so that the women might finish their inevitable dishes and attend. It was Jessonda who urged them to attend and whose almost nightly singing made it a pleasure to do so. It was she who gathered the women for mutual instruction, forming what— after Sappho's gentle clique at Lesbos — must surely be counted the first woman's club.

The women liked her, yet her real friends were men. It was among men that her wit was truely at home. The old Harmony pamphlets call her the spiritual helpmate of the Owens, and, indeed, she was the helpmate of us all. She seemed — this girl — in spite of her youth, to have

almost the maturity of a statesman. Who but she could have made those whip retorts to Paul Brown, who now, alas for Harmony, came among us. Robert Owen was too kind to answer him as he deserved, and the younger Owens were habitually gentle.

Shortly after my home-coming Robert Owen had received a letter of self-announcement from this Paul Brown — a dolorous affair of thirty pages. In due course he arrived, and thereafter our meetings had to be darkened with the presence of this sallow censor. Our laws were a wrong against God — Brown's God and amply known by him. Our finance was a mistrustful piece of accounting. Our meals were stinted in butter, tea, and milk. Robert Owen was an impostor and schemer; and as to our social gatherings, we were dancing straight to Hell.

Jessonda routed him in open argument. She left him stinging under our universal laughter. He afterward wrote a book about us and that sting of his discomfiture was in the book.

Jessonda's practice hour was at six in the morning. At this same hour my duty called me to the school woodpile opposite. Punctual as the clock I would hear the caroled scales and trills from her little window. I had asked Jessonda to set her window open and she had laughed at me. But she always did it. Every morning came the same scales in the same succession — I marveled at her patience, — and the same slow, accented trills increasing in quickness until they filled the air with vibrant sound. Then at the last there was always one beautiful song — no more — which sent me on my day with happy heart.

Many enjoyed it beside me. I have seen David-Dale

stop under the window unwilling to go until the song should be done. I have seen William, and Robert-Dale, too, walk dutifully past to the corner, only to come back and linger. The Owens were really Welsh and born with a hunger for sweet sounds. But what touched me most was the simpler people — workmen, farmers, women — who tarried in twos and threes.

Later, however, it appeared that many of the simpler people regarded my lady's singing with scant favor. One morning I overheard a group of work-people pass along our low wall, talking.

"Yes, hear ye that! These fine ladies make the devil of a fuss over work — equal work for everybody they call it. But they can sit and do that sort of thing by the hour."

"Well, I suppose she teaches all day," said one of the women grudgingly.

"Aw, what's teachin'!" sneered another. "Settin' still an' talkin' nonsense to a lot of children. I tell ye it's the same old story. We do the work an' they live off o' us. They hain't givin' no wages. 'Work fur work,' they say, 'hour fur hour.' Well, just let 'em plough a bit, an' cook. Then they'd see!"

I leaped over the wall and stood among them.

"Jenny Pinch," I said, "you know very well that that young lady has milked two cows this morning. She never practices till she has."

"Milked two cows!" laughed Jenny. "My! that must 'a' pretty near kilt her!"

It was not long before these complaints came before Robert Owen. He heard them considerately as usual and repaired to Jessonda.

"Will you take more cows?" he asked.

"Yes, certainly," she laughed. And next morning, to Mrs. Malone's delight, she took to her care another cow and the appertaining milk-pans.

"An' she do wash 'em that clean," chuckled Mrs. Malone. "Mandy Ross, now, I allus hev to go over her work. But Jessie's — Sure, an' I just laves it to her. I know iverything 'ull be right."

That morning at the same stroke of the clock the scales sounded as usual. Nor was it long before the crows gathered again to their croaking. Their envy was not a whit appeased.

Again the patient Owen heard them. Again he came, apologetic, to Jessonda with his request. And again two cows were added.

Jessonda, merely rose another half-hour earlier. From my window I saw her swinging down the street in the cold twilight toward the dairy. I sprang wrathfully from my bed. I certainly made the chips fly that morning! And promptly at six between the blows of my axe I heard the scales and trills. The final song came high and sweet that morning with a swiftness and a laughter in it:

> "'T is dabbling in the dew
> Makes the milkmaids so fair."

And two carpenters who were lingering under the window made off shamefaced.

Yet even this did not satisfy. "Miss Macleod has nothing to do," they still cried, — "nothing whatever to do!" And Robert Owen at this juncture brought his fist down on the table.

"Nothing to do? You shall say that now with no satis-

faction from me. Miss Macleod is too valuable a worker to be wasted in tasks unfit. The sooner you learn the worth of such work as hers the better it will be for the Community."

That day he took away all dairy duty from her. It was only by dint of real pleading on her part and Mrs. Malone's that the two original cows were restored to her.

Furthermore he insisted upon a practice time for her in the afternoon, a privilege which heretofore she had not allowed herself. It fell at the hour of my botany class and I regularly opened windows long after the weather was too cold for such a luxury. The children huddled in their seats and grinned at me. And when I asked Achille Frétageot to name the flowers which *sing* in the autumn they giggled at my blunder with merry significance.

It was perhaps wholly natural that in our evening dances and our nutting and riding parties, which were now our seasonable pleasure, Jessonda should be left by the others more and more to my care. And Jessonda herself acquiesced. Would she not cross the whole room to me — when I came in (that is, if I did not at once go to her)! We constantly had some mutual enterprise. Ever since that walk of ripening friendship Jessonda had seemed to me mysteriously accustomed and familiar, as if she had always been with me, my closest comrade.

In these sharp days of late fall it was wonderful to canter forth in the sunshine — fifteen or twenty of us — all the young folk of the town. We were like children of a larger family together. Often and again Jessonda and I would find ourselves far ahead or else in the rear of the others, absorbedly discussing some project of school or

town; or I listening while she told of the Europe-world which she knew so well.

Once as we so rode, the day was falling and the air grew very chill. I saw that she was cold, and taking off my cloak, I drove my horse to hers.

"No," she said. "Why should you be cold in my stead?"

But I laid the cloak about her shoulders and fastened it at her neck. I was not aware that my arm lingered over the precious service — until she shrank a little with the most beautiful maiden shyness. The gesture touched me with an overwhelming tenderness as strange as a new dawn, hallowing her so that for very wonder I could not speak all the way home.

No doubt all Harmony knew what was coming upon me and in some fashion I, too, must have known. But the true quality of this rare thing had not in the least dawned upon me. For that — the look across an eternity was needful. And now I was looking full across! I knew now that I had loved Jessonda even before seeing her — from the first moment of hearing her voice in the little room at Garcia's.

CHAPTER XLIX

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

III. CHANGES

My personal absorptions had come to such a pitch that for the moment I had quite forgotten our Community interests. It therefore came upon me as a thunderclap when at our next evening meeting our Society abolished the General Constitution and divided the Community into three sections, of which Maclure's Educational Society was to be one. Harmony, they said, was too large for the perfect agreement of all its members. The curious quarrels of which William Owen had told me had never been quite settled.

"This is an astonishing move," said Jessonda anxiously. She was, as usual, sitting beside me. "I do not like the look of it."

"Oh, it is nothing," I answered. "It's the kicks and sprawls of a healthy babe. You should have seen us at first in the 'Preliminary Society.' After all, you know," I added youthfully, "we're right — gloriously right. So we're bound to win through."

She agreed with me. And, indeed, in the presence of Robert Owen with his ardent hopefulness it was not possible to be damped. The meeting ended happily enough with Robert-Dale's reading of his new poem dedicated to the children of New Harmony's liberalizing schools:

"Awake, ye sons of light and joy,
And scout the Demon of the Schools:
The fiend that scowls but to decoy,
To pamper zealots, frighten fools,
To blind the judgment, crib the soul.
Wake up! And let your actions tell
That you with Peace and Virtue dwell."

In the week that followed we had to face another problem. Spirits had never been sold in the town, but somehow Ariel Shonts got roaring drunk; also a farmer who flourished under the name of "River Jordan." And in our evening gatherings it was plain from the abominable odor that many others were drinking "prudently." Robert Owen quickly traced the liquor to the mill. He flatly accused Squire Baily.

"Yes," answered that worthy, slapping his pocket, "I got a bar'l of it in my cellar — at least, I did hev it. I took it in for a debt and I've cleared quite a bit on it."

"Do you mean to say that you retailed it here?" queried Owen.

"I certainly did."

Owen smiled. "I see," he said simply, "that you do not understand The Principles. I shall have to ask you to destroy the rest of it."

Squire Baily often retold this tale of how he "poked it over on Old Owen."

But through these public events I passed very much as in a dream.

I worked haltingly at my book on the Silurian shells. But Jessonda progressed famously with her "Hero of Three Revolutons," a history of the liberties which Lafayette had helped to win. She read me each chapter as she finished it. She blushed at my praise and accepted

my criticisms with a serious gratitude which surprised and delighted me.

Robert-Dale at this time announced his engagement to a young lady in New York. I marveled how he had managed it — had had the courage and skill to speak. Yet, of course, Mary Robinson was no Jessonda, thought I!

Christmas came. It was not then the custom in America to celebrate Chrismas with tree and gifts. Robert Owen made a speech upon Mohammed, Jesus, and goodwill. And Jessonda at Robert Owen's request made her first public address. Very shy she was at first — rounding out careful sentences in her clear, sweet voice. But soon the subject swung her as she set forth Ignorance the great evil, and Knowledge as its remedy.

Her voice rang to the farthest end of the hall. She stood a slender, girlish figure quivering under the rush of strong thought, her dear face shining and saying, as always, far more than her words. Is it a wonder that I came away tenfold more dumb than before, exulting and miserable!

It was at this time that I first became anxious over William Pelham. He was too ill to come to the Christmas speeches, and I went around to his room, after bidding Jessonda a most inadequate good-night, to find him lying pale and in pain.

"I ought to have had the speeches for the 'Gazette,'" he said discouragedly.

"But I will get Jessonda to write it out. I will bring it to you."

"And Robert Owen's?"

"Oh, yes —" (I had forgotten that!)

I tended him all through the night. I found to my astonishment that he was worrying bitterly over Community conditions.

"But they are all temporary, Pelham. They will pass," I assured him. "The remedies are already applied. It is only because you are a little ill that these things seem ominous. Don't think about them. Let me read to you."

"Oh, but I'm hungry for poetry," he protested. "You scientific fellows won't read poetry."

"I don't read it usually. But I will."

So at his bidding I read the "Sonnets" of Shakespeare — not only that night, but many nights thereafter, "When to the sessions of sweet silent thought" — and many others.

"I believe I do like poetry, after all," I admitted. The "Sonnets" went to my head like wine!

CHAPTER L

IN WHICH I SPEAK MY MIND

I HAD finished my teaching for the day and had come out of my geology class trying to think how I could help André Dufour to understand the law of currents, which he seemed to find difficult.

As I passed the little music-room, I caught sight of Jessonda sitting in the afternoon sunshine, her curly head bent over a pile of counterpoint papers, which she was correcting, her lips pursed with an adorable expression of industry.

And suddenly her loveliness swept me. Her courage, her headlong power, her sweetness, grew liberate and clear. I believe that in that moment I saw her immortal reality. Before I was aware, I was in the room, had caught her hand from its work, bowing my face upon it.

"Jessonda, I love you! With all my soul I love you!" I cried. And I poured out my love in words which seemed neither of my making nor volition. I was too breathless to speak aloud, too happy, indeed, to speak at all. Something spoke for me and showed, as I never supposed could be shown, my whole being lighted and living with love of her.

I don't know what she said or did. I only know that abruptly my words sounded like a knell in the little room. I looked into her face.

"Oh, Seth, Seth!" she cried, "I did not think you would do this. Oh, what have you done?"

She gazed at me wide-eyed, retreating. Impossible as it seemed, she was drawing away. I held her hand.

"Jessonda, you must n't look at me like that. You love me. You certainly love me!" I felt my voice breaking. "You have shown it a hundred times."

"No! Oh, Seth, no! Don't say I have misled you like that!"

"You did not mislead me. Oh, Jessonda, it is when you have no idea what is coming into your eyes. Always when you meet me — it flashes —"

I paused. The memory overwhelmed me for a moment.

She hid her dear, betraying face. She was trembling like a leaf.

"No," she said determinedly, — and the words came upon me with terrible shock, — "no, I do not love you — not in this way." Then in the silence she added lamely, "You must not think so, Seth."

I could not attempt to answer, for I was plunged into an abyss of dumbness through which I could not reach to any word. I knew she was sincere, yet my mind seemed plunging furiously on, unable to believe it. The solemn clock on the mantel-shelf took possession of the place.

I think my face must have spoken for me, for suddenly she reached both hands to me, her lovely eyes swimming with tears.

"I must tell you," she faltered, "why I can never love anybody, except in friendship." (Only the very young can make such sweeping statements of tragedy. But Jessonda was none the less sincere.) "Though I do not want to speak of it, even to you," she added. "It is about grandfather."

"Then you must not," I said.

But unexpectedly her voice changed. "I want you to know. Oh, I want you to know," she cried.

She clasped her hands together over the papers on the table. She was looking away from me.

"It began," she said, "on the evening when Signor Giraldi came into our circle at Florence. He was most responsibly vouched for. Yet I feared him. I thought him a spy and now I know that he was."

I listened, wondering bitterly what the propaganda in Italy could have to do with Jessonda's love for me.

"Grandfather trusted him, though he listened when I first told him my fears. Grandfather always listened to me and weighed my words. Perhaps he made me headstrong that way. Adriano Giraldi was not of very high rank, but he was one of the favorite companions of King Ferdinand. He made my grandfather believe that his devotion to the King was feigned for the purpose of helping the patriots. He was a man of keen mind, very able in his handling of other men. I do not wonder that he could win the confidence of my grandfather. I used to wonder that so able a man should care to run after the stupid King. But I never trusted him. Something — some aversion quite apart from my mind — told me that he was not true. The first time grandfather was ever angry with me was when I rejected Adriano's attentions. He told me I must — I must accept them for the good of Italy. And he so persuaded and pleaded — that — that —" She paused. "I told him I would try. And I did try. Oh, there is no excuse for such a thing! Not Italy, nor grandfather, nor any excuse on earth that could make it right. I have known that ever since I have been here in this innocent Harmony life where everybody speaks

true. Oh, what if we do dispute and wrangle here! Is it not all real and outspoken?

"And I think that after a while Adriano really came to love me in his own fashion, which makes it all the worse." She turned her face still farther from me. "Then one day grandfather told me that Giraldi had proposed for me in marriage and when I said, no, grandfather told me that he had already accepted the proposal for me."

"But surely," I broke in, "he could not do that, not in this age of the world!" The tale was beginning to fill me with dread.

"Yes, he could — in Italy," she answered. "I told grandfather that I had rights of my own. If ever I should choose to make such a sacrifice, it must be of my own free will — not of compulsion. And grandfather told me — oh, very gently — to think it over for myself. I did think it over. I decided that even if Adriano Giraldi were all grandfather thought him, I could never marry him, and I told grandfather so. Then he said — just as quietly, 'Nevertheless, you must do it.' 'But this is my affair,' I said, 'it is I who must decide.' 'No,' he answered, 'the affair is mine. I have decided.'

"I was amazed, bewildered. I asked him what he had meant by the liberty which he had taught me, for which we worked in peril of our lives. He did not even understand what I was trying to ask. And I saw that the liberty which he had taught me all these years was a liberty for *men* as heads of families. Italian *men* were to be free to think, to act, to hope. I was to have no part in this liberty.

"I did not even answer him. I went upstairs knowing

that I was a prisoner. And yet — even yet — Oh, I know you will not be able to understand this! — I loved my grandfather so dearly that I could not bear the break that would cut me from him. We had been isolated together for so many years. I had no other kin and no other friend.

"One Sunday the banns were published in the church. In Italy, Seth, that is considered a binding ceremony."

"It is not binding here!" I broke in sternly.

"No, but grandfather considers me bound — that hurts me. Then they brought me a marriage contract to sign — Giraldi and grandfather with a notary. Giraldi signed it. And in a sort of nightmare I sat down and drew the paper toward me. But suddenly, when I saw the writing, Giraldi's name and my name — with the name of God — I seized the paper and tore and tore it until there was nothing left."

"Thank God for that!" I cried devoutly.

She hid her face quickly and for a while she could not speak. At length she resumed:

"At this act of mine, grandfather became another man. I cannot tell you the words which he spoke, though they ring in my mind at night like hammer-strokes. I say to myself that he did not mean them. Yet he did; he did mean them! And, oh, in that moment some great faith broke in me. A grayness stole into the background of my mind and the happier light has never come back."

She turned her face toward me, and I almost wept at the sight of it — not its paleness nor its tears, but something else that was there.

"You mean that you cannot trust me?" I asked gently.

"I will not trust any man that fully."

"Jessonda, dear child!" I called her. "It is you — your fine, fearless spirit that I love. I could no more thwart you than I could kill you. And you cannot see that?"

"No," she said honestly, very low.

I saw that she was worlds away from loving me. Yet in the silence that followed I had no place for self-pity.

"No," she added, "you think you would not thwart me, and you would never mean to do so. But you would have the right, and, as the world now is, you would do it unconsciously. Don't you see how that would destroy our deep friendship?"

"Tell me how you got away," I said at last.

"I ran away that night. It did not occur to them that I would do anything like that. I went to the Marquis de Lafayette in Paris. For I had met him in Naples where he was grandfather's friend. I did not know what Lafayette might do. He might send me back. But he did not. He was large-hearted and understanding. For two years I was with his wife in that beautiful household.

"Then Giraldi learned in some way that I was in Paris and followed me there. It was then that I came to New York. Signor Garcia had been my teacher and he helped me. But when Adriano came to New York I did not know what to do."

"Oh," I groaned, "and I almost refused to bring you!"

"But you were good — good! I never can forget what I felt when you relented and let me come."

"But do you not realize that you are in America?" I queried. "No Giraldi, nor any other man, can lay hand on you here against your will."

"No, I am not afraid of him in that way. But grand-

father is in Italy. I now know what Signor Giraldi's power is there. He would threaten me through my beloved. Do you know" — she added breathlessly — "if — if he were to face me with the destruction of my grandfather, I think — I might give in."

"You have been hurt and hunted out of all reason," I cried out passionately. "You have been wounded — wounded!" I could see nothing, feel nothing but the break of that fine spirit of hers, which could not trust now any more.

"But don't be angry with dear grandfather!" she pleaded hastily. "I should feel so false — so recreant if I —"

"I am not thinking of him," I interrupted. "I am thinking of you." Indeed, I was thinking of her so passionately that my thought spoke out. "I wonder if years — long years of love and keeping faith — could undo what your grandfather has done to you."

"Seth! Oh, you must not give me your years!" she said, as if frightened.

At that my heart broke suddenly within me. "They are given! They are given!" I said. And fearing to lay my own grief upon her I left the room.

CHAPTER LI

THE WISDOM OF A FATHER

I STRODE through the twilight, snowy street, and out beyond. The woods seemed just then the only place where I could breathe. There I tramped in snow and darkness, now suffering for Jessonda, so inwardly slain, now relapsing into my own grief. As the hours wore on, I had reason to bless my boyhood hardships. For, as the desolating tides of thought surged over me, I recalled my old dull fortitude which I knew would last me until better strength arrived. In the old time it was Maclure that had helped me. He could not help me now. Yet it was the fear of burdening him which at last brought me back to town. Shut fast in my room and trying to work, I heard his familiar step in the hallway.

"Seth," he asked, opening my door, "what is the matter? Are you ill?"

"No, I am all right," I said, pushing aside the writings to which I had set myself.

"Something is the matter," he said coming to me in quick concern.

"Yes, but I cannot possibly speak of it just now. I will a little later."

"Very well, son," he said. And with his scrupulous tact he left the room.

But in a few minutes I heard him returning. He seemed to have some difficulty finding words.

"Whatever this is," he said, — "some fancy, some dream such as you had in Philadelphia, — you will not

let anything deceive you again into — well, a misunderstanding with me."

"No!" I cried, "never in the world!" I sprang up. The memory of that reconciliation flooded me like a physical warmth. I suddenly was able to speak.

"Mr. Maclure, I have asked for something which I ought never to have hoped for. I cannot have it, of course, and I must face the lack of it."

"Jessie Macleod," he guessed at once. "But the girl is openly in love with you. We have all seen that." Even as a mistake these words gave me a breath of joy.

"No," I said sadly, "she is not. She has just been obliged to tell me so."

"You don't mean to say the foolish girl has refused you — you, Seth?"

"So it seems." I could not help smiling grimly at his amazement.

"But she has given you every conceivable reason for encouragement. What business has she to use you like that? What business —"

"Don't blame her," I cried sharply, — "of all things, not that!"

I think my distress must have rung quick in my voice — for he said quite differently, "I will not, my son." He paused, embarrassed, by my table.

"Would you mind," he queried at last, "helping me in some re-labeling in the laboratory? I am particularly anxious to clear it up quickly. I have some important papers to prepare."

I wanted much to be alone, but I could not, of course, refuse. Silently, and, I am afraid, rather reluctantly, I put on my hat.

Maclure had already remodeled the old stone fort of the Rappites into a geological museum and laboratory. Here we were accustomed to do our work together with David-Dale, who had now fully given himself to this science. We crossed the snowy garden to the great three-storied structure, bigger than any museum in the country in that day.

In the upper story by the blazing fireplace we set to work among the drawers and shelves. Maclure seemed to hurry me a little in a way not usual with him. Several times he stopped the labeling to consult me about certain statements in one of his papers. He even made me rewrite some of his paragraphs and would not be satisfied until the nicest precision was reached.

This delayed the labeling. Eleven o'clock came, midnight, and when I called attention to the time, he only said —

"If you don't mind, I really would like to get through with this."

It was two o'clock in the morning when we stumbled back through the snow to the mansion. Even here Maclure followed me to my room.

"Now, you'll get to bed at once," he said.

"Yes," I yawned, "if I can find my way."

As he said good-night at the door, a gust down the great hallway blew out the candle and left us in total darkness. Otherwise I could never have done what I did. I caught his hand.

"Good-night, dear father," I said.

Then, with all my clothes on, I turned in and slept like a top.

CHAPTER LII

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

IV. TROUBLE

In the weeks that followed, I had to accustom myself to a new Jessonda — a fluttered, timid, and slightly distant lady, who never allowed herself to be alone with me if she could help it. We were on several committees together. She was entirely business-like.

There was a sharp, cold spell just then, and this, I told myself, was why she shut the singing-window. But I was hurt that she did not mention it, and I sorely missed the sweet voice during my morning tasks. It seemed the figure of more precious windows closed and barred against me. The change was such that all Harmony could see. This, I regret to say, touched my pride.

One twilight hour I ran across Jessonda reading alone in a far corner of the great hall. I sat down beside her. She seemed afraid that I would begin some foolish reasoning, but I only mentioned that I had read her poem in the "Gazette" and had taken great pleasure in it. The poem was an address to the American citizen and ended thus:

> "Thou canst walk amid thy race of freeborn men
> Whose fathers broke the stubborn tyrant's rod
> And taught the truth none will unlearn again,
> That man hath no superior but his God."

"That poem was new to me," I told her. "Have you just written it?"

"No," she answered uncomfortably. "I can't write at all lately. Seth," she added quickly, "I wish you did not look so tired."

"Oh, I'm all right," I answered stoutly. "But I'm working very hard just now. Maclure is in a hurry for that illustrated shell book and Lucy works faster than I."

"I don't think I made you understand," she said, as though it were something which she had been saving to say to me, "just what conclusions I came to while at the Marquis de Lafayette's; you know he is a great teacher of liberty, and through him I realized that — that if certain great things were to be done, I might be one to do them. I am more free than most women, and I have decided that I ought to stay free. I made a kind of vow to use my powers well. Women are such voiceless sheep. Some one must speak for them."

"Woman's lot has always seemed to me of the hardest — from my mother's on," I said.

"Oh, and only think," she responded, her voice suddenly ringing, — "think of the contract which the best woman must sign at her marriage — all trust on her part, all ownership on his. No right to her own property, no redress for drunken beatings — and worse. Only trust, trust, trust!"

"Surely that is n't so."

"Yes, that is Indiana law. It is a wicked, wicked contract. No woman should sign it. No man should sign it."

"Certainly they should not if all that is true."

"It is true. Robert-Dale and I have looked it up."

This gave me a foolish pang common to lovers the

world over. Why should she and young Robert-Dale be looking up Indiana marriage laws together?

I told her good-night, wishing I had not stopped with her at all.

At the Thursday meeting another change in the Community took place. Two of our three communal societies at this time abandoned their independence and requested Robert Owen with four trustees to take general charge of them. Only the third society, the "Educational" under Maclure, continued in its separate form.

I, of course, belonged to this society, and thankful though I was that our department had succeeded, I was deeply anxious about the others. The real origin of their trouble was that they had again been incautious in the admission of their members.

I was roused from musing over the situation, by hearing my name called. I had been elected one of the four trustees in the government of these two societies. I felt sorry for this, not only because I belonged to the Educational Society, which was, I fear, considered aristocratic by the rest of the Community, but chiefly because there were others much better fitted for the responsibility than I.

I had sprung to my feet to refuse, but William Pelham pulled me down.

"Don't do that," he whispered; "you don't want to seem unwilling?"

"No, I would do anything — everything!"

"You," he told me later, "are a fresh mind at the work and you have a certain quietude about you which will count against this petty wrangling. You often seem like a Quaker, Seth Way."

"My father was a Quaker."

"I thought so. A sterling people and their quality abides long after their form of faith is outgrown."

"And you are more hopeful now for the Community?" I asked anxiously.

"Yes; I believe we shall somehow win through."

It fell to my share to oversee the dye-house, the boot-and-shoe shop with its seventeen workmen, and the soap-and-candle works. Of course each had a skilled foreman. I had to take the general management, to see that the men were content with their work, to confer with the foremen, and to make the financial reports to Robert Owen.

I was always the first at the dye-house, a dim and spacious place with its copper caldrons glimmering in the shadows. Columbine loved to come with me here, — "because," she said, "the big kettles twinkle so much." Here I did little more than greet the men as they came; then I passed on to the other shops. If any one was absent I at once visited his home and often ended by bringing him back with me. There were certain who were always finding some impediment to work. Others under the same conditions found none. But Amos Edwards suddenly turned from a steady workman to a malcontent and for no cause that I could discover. One evening, however, happening in upon him for a friendly visit, I found Paul Brown there. I outsat Paul, leading the converse away from Community affairs as often as Paul brought it back. The next evening I went again. I found the same visitor making the same whining criticisms. But this time it transpired that Amos had once been a fur-trader, and I soon had him a-going on the animals he knew. We discussed

the values of mink and coon and beaver skins and the various habits of the animals and methods of trapping. I recalled to him some of their inexplicable ways, and even allowed myself a bit of bragging over a fight with a bear. Curiously enough, Brown's influence was completely broken. Amos appeared with smiling face next morning at the shop. Why a bit of woodsy conversation should allay social fears I never could quite conceive.

In addition to my shop inspection, I was responsible for the happiness and right dealing of certain families and individuals. Of these my most comforting "parishioner" was old Aunt Sammy — she of the washtub, the lace sacque, and the torn brocade skirt.

But Aunt Sammy had deep cause for content. She was a poet. I think she never rubbed linen save to the rhythm of some growing lyric. Cantos unrolled behind her as she carried in the clothes. Untimely deaths and Wabash high waters were her chief subjects. But even about these she was very cheerful. She was always on the still hunt for a listener — as what poet is not? And every week Pelham would find in the box which he had placed outside his window for town contributions a long poem of Aunt Sammy's destined for the columns of the "Gazette." The trials of New Harmony editors have always been severe.

Listeners, however, were just what Aunt Sammy failed to procure.

"But she got me," cried Silas Twiney one day. "I was shinglin' her roof this mornin'. Yer know it's been full o' leaks almost before the Preliminary Society. An' tarnation to it, if she did n't come up the ladder an' stick her sunbunnit up over the eaves. She knowed I could n't noway git down. She says:

"'If you are tired or if you are weary,
Just pop down and take a straw*beery*.'

They was twenty more verses to it," said Silas scratching his head, but I fergit the rest."

My Community duties invaded my studies not a little. I was forced to work late night after night in the laboratory. For not even my beloved Community could make me forego my studies. I saw Jessonda daily. That fact was both a sorrow and a joy. It was heavenly sweet after a long, confused day to sit in the big room at Maclure's and hear her sing. But when I had to see her time and again in that same room engaged in close converse with Francis Mailor, the storekeeper, I was certainly in despair.

William Owen also noticed this.

"Look here, Seth, do you think Jessie Macleod ought to be so much with that Francis Mailor?" he asked me anxiously.

"I should say not!" I answered. "But who has the right to interfere?"

"I thought you might," he said. Then, seeing my face, he hurried on to say: "Mailor is filling her ears with stories of the South: says he was once a negro overseer. I'll wager he was a cruel one. She is gathering facts and writing a paper, I believe. I overheard him telling her some cock-and-bull story of how he saved a negro from the bloodhounds. I can't imagine why he should single out her for his attentions. That man is here after money, I am positive. And father still trusts him!"

"But Jessonda is as poor as a church mouse."

"Yes," William sighed. "I suppose, then, it is because she is conspicuous. And beautiful —" he added gently.

His eyes softened with a look that made my heart jump with further trouble.

At this time Robert Owen again left us to deliver lectures in the East on Socialism. I cannot help thinking that if he, with his executive ability and personality, had remained with us steadily through this period, we should have fared better in our Great Experiment.

CHAPTER LIII

THE END OF A LONG WAY

MEANWHILE the winter was wearing on to spring. It was a misty evening with a moon behind the mist. I had gone out after supper along the lower Mount Vernon road on some final Community errand before repairing to the laboratory.

Just beyond the town I became aware of a woman stumbling along ahead of me in the deep mud. A boy was with her. They were walking hastily, and the woman's actions indicated anxiety. I hurried forward thinking to help them. At closer range I unaccountably realized that the woman was Jessonda.

My first impulse was to call to her. But Jessonda had of late studiously avoided me. Our estrangement was such that I felt I had no right to interfere. In a flash I associated this going in some way with Francis Mailor. Yet what could he do to induce her to come out like this?

I did not decide to follow her. But all the same I did follow. Soon we were so far beyond town in the misty dark that I could not think of abandoning her, but stepped on miserably, feeling myself both a fool and a spy. I gained upon her, for the mud was a deep clay and her little feet could scarce pull through it. Then in the darkness I heard her sobbing. This was more than I could bear and I leaped forward. As I did so I saw her turn with the boy into a deserted cabin beside the road. There was a dearborn in front of the place.

I had not time even to guess at the meaning of all this when I saw a light flashing through the open chinks and heard my darling's voice cry out as if she had looked on death. I rushed in. Mailor was not there. Wicked heart that I was to think such a thing!

My darling was kneeling beside a straw bed holding in her arms the figure of an old, old man, calling him all the endearing names her sweet Italian could lay tongue to. I knew him at once for her grandfather, though how he should come to be here in this wretched cabin at Harmony I could not guess.

I crossed to the bed and Jessonda looked up at me.

"Seth," she cried, "Seth, help me!" I shall never forget the relief in her eyes —the reaching toward me as though it was her right.

She was weeping, yet she at once became quiet and business-like. She drew from her bag a flask and poured something into a glass. But it was I who lifted the old white head and gave the mixture to the refusing lips. Jessonda had, indeed, looked upon death or its close semblance. The old man was beyond speech, and at first I feared that he was beyond our remedies. I fell to rubbing the feet and she the aged hands.

The farmboy stood beside us staring, with his hands in his pockets.

"Go at once with the carriage and get Dr. Price," I told him.

"No," said Jessonda. "I called there. He is in Grayville — will not be back all night. Mrs. Price gave me these remedies."

I knew that there was no better chemist in town than the doctor's wife. And even as Jessonda spoke the old

man opened his eyes. I thought Jessonda's soul would leap, visible, from her face as she bent over him.

"*Carissimo !* Beloved!" she whispered. "I am here — thy 'Sonda'!"

They were wonderful old eyes which looked up to her, the very foremaking of Jessonda's, and even at this crisis they were full of light and wisdom.

"Didst thou come so long a way to Florence, *Gioia mia ?*" he asked in his quavering Italian.

"No, no. Thou to me — all this weary way! Thou to me," she said, her voice breaking with tenderness.

"I did not think thou couldst find the road back to me. But thou didst," he pursued with a flash of glee. "*Sonda mia ! Sonda mia !*"

The cadence with which he spoke her name was a whole lifeful of affection. He closed his happy eyes. Jessonda's anxious look questioned mine.

"He will be clear in a moment," I whispered. And sure enough when he awoke again it was with a new authority.

"Jessonda child," he said, "thou art here. But almost thou wert too late."

She kissed the hand she was holding, but he went on. "Sonda, I want to say to thee, that I did not mean those words. I never meant those words. Dost understand?"

"Oh, grandfather — I know, I know. I have forgotten them all!"

"I was sure thou wouldst forget them, Jessonda, if I could but say — just this — just this. — Thank God, it is said!"

He dreamed off again into what I thought was a helpful sleep. We dared not move on either side of him. I was

wonderfully happy. Jessonda's sorrow had been struck off from her and I was near her.

Suddenly his eyes opened full upon me.

"Guido," he said recognizingly, "art thou here also?"

Jessonda looked across at me in terror. "Guido was his son," she faltered. "He died before I was born."

"Come closer," he commanded me. "It is so long since I have seen thy face."

I could not but obey.

"Now, Sonda is in thy care — thy care," he repeated. "I am content."

I signed to Jessonda to give me the restorative, but he pushed the glass away.

"No, no," he said decisively. "I want Sonda to understand once for all that she is to marry Adriano Giraldi. Only so can we fully ally him with our cause. He is wavering. He is wavering, I tell you!"

"Never mind that now," I quickly answered him. "I will persuade him."

"You? You? What can you do? You died years ago —" He who a moment ago could not lift a hand now raised himself and shook his finger at the cowering girl.

"Yes, *Ingrata!* You are all very loyal to dear Italy until it comes to a sacrifice — a little sacrifice! I would give my life. *Dio mio!* I did give it! And you will not even bestow your hand in simple marriage!" His voice lifted mockingly.

"Jessonda," I pleaded, "step away — out of sight, quick. He is in fever. He does not know what he is saying."

But he had caught her hand.

"Tell me now, once for all, will you do it? There is yet

opportunity. I am here to ask you that. Will you marry Adriano?"

I saw Jessonda's white lips forming a response, and by the terror in her face I knew that she would take a vow and mean it unalterably.

"Jessonda," I cried sharply. "Not that word! Stop! Do not say it!"

And under my quicker lash she wavered a moment. That moment was broken by the old man's cry, and he fell back unconscious.

"Get me the brandy, quick!" I ordered. For only this urgent occupation kept her from throwing herself upon the bed in a passion of repentance.

Our next half-hour was too busy for words or thoughts. Only when the breathing grew more regular, I leaned across to plead.

"Jessonda, he will speak again. But remember — remember it is nothing but the figment of dream — only a torn shred of his mind. You will only injure him by taking it seriously."

"Yes, Seth," she answered submissively; "that is true."

I went out with the boy to the carriage to send him with an urgent summons to Madame Neef.

"You see, Mister," said the boy, "it was this here rig in front of the cabin that made me go in. The poor old man, he was sick and silly. He ought 'a' brung a driver. Hit's a good thing I found him."

"It is, indeed," I said.

" An' my! how he did beg me to go an' fetch this here Miss Macleod!"

I returned to the cabin and built a fire on the vacant

hearth. But I was wrong in thinking that Signor Di Baia would speak again. The night spent itself in the sad losing battle. Shortly before dawn Mrs. Neef arrived with her husband bringing many needful things.

And a few moments later the breath, which had grown fainter and fainter, whispered itself out of the worn body as though a bird had floated free of the little room. We had seen the cruel fanatic and the angel contending in him for the mastery. But the fanatic was only a fiction of his illness; the angel was the reality. It was the angel who set the seal upon the patriot face as it fell asleep.

In the early dawn Jessonda and I rode back toward Harmony. It was one of those gracious dawns which invade the winter with the exultation of spring. Jessonda sat beside me wordless, unseeing. Now and then she whispered over the phrases of her grief. But her words were still Italian and I could not always understand.

Suddenly she spoke out to me: "Oh, the battle was not worth it — not half worth it."

"What battle, dear Jessonda?"

"My disobedience, my anger, my abandoning him. Oh, I was so cruel to have left him for any reason! I could have been with him these precious years. It was a little thing he asked me to do."

"It was not a little thing," I said sternly. "He compared it to death — but such a thing is worse than death."

"It is not! It is not! I ought to have done it! I ought to have given the promise!"

I turned toward her wondering whether I must censure her folly or tranquillize her grief. But seeing my face she changed quickly.

"Oh, Seth, Seth! To think I could hurt you like that! Forgive me. I have hurt you so many times."

"Don't think of me. Think rather of what he said when he was clear. It seems to me worth a lifetime of battle for you to hear your name called — as — as he called it then."

At this she began to weep softly and I was thankful for her tears. I had almost to lift her from the dearborn, my darling who was so strong to bear encounters and hardships, but who sank so utterly under the strain of her love.

Mrs. Chapelsmith was out. I laid Jessonda on the couch in the kitchen, and knowing how the drinking of pure water will heal weariness, I brought her in a fresh draught from the well.

As I set aside the cup she stretched out both hands to me like a frightened child.

"Don't go yet," she pleaded; "I am utterly alone now — now that he is not in the world."

I caught her two hands and held them, my whole heart filling with my love. I knew I must not think or speak of myself, for she was looking toward death, not life.

I sat beside her, holding her from the abyss of loneliness. As the time passed, she grew still and then quite unexpectedly fell alseep. An hour I sat there looking upon her sleeping face, while sorrow and tenderness and wide adoration by turns had their way with me.

CHAPTER LIV

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

V. WEEDING THE COMMUNITY GARDEN

Robert Owen returned late in the week and our next Community meeting was one of most serious import. The reports of the several trustees (including my own) had been brought in. William Owen had worked long hours over the accounts. The result was plain and appalling. Our Community was not paying expenses, and no prospect of improvement was in sight. The cause was not far to seek. Members were utterly careless of Community appliances and property, many had lost interest in the experiment itself. There were, besides, discordant varieties of character and habits among us. Such was the condition to be faced at our meeting. I expected a stormy and discouraging session and perhaps even some radical action. But I confess I was not prepared for the resolution *to dissolve the Community*. This was moved at the very outset of the meeting. It was met with a storm of protest, but was rushed through uproariously and almost without debate.

Perhaps I ought to have expected something like this; but like all news of death it rang hollow and unreal in my ears.

William Pelham was sitting beside me.

"We are no longer a Community," he said solemnly. "We are no longer a Community. What does this mean, Seth?"

"Yes," spoke Robert Owen from the platform, as if in answer, "New Harmony Village is no longer a Community. But this by no means implies that our Great Experiment is to be abandoned. Harmony will now constitute a center from which smaller communities shall be given off. Feiba Pevelli is already such, Macluria is another. Both were established on our farmlands almost contemporaneously with Harmony itself. I invite groups of you to form similar communities at once. I will lease you lands for that purpose and will assist you during your first year. It is advisable that such communities select as their members only persons who are perfectly in accord. We of Harmony will be your workshop, your base of supplies, your clearing-house, your counselors and warm friends!"

At each turn in Community affairs Robert Owen had thus come forward with liberal expenditure. He had made his fortune by his own unaided efforts since the age of ten. But he seemed to value it little save as a means of creating this world-happiness which we were attempting in this town of ours.

The meeting adjourned. Little groups began to separate in the room. Some grew loud in altercation, others talked seriously. John Cooper — an English country squire, who had been a Communist from the first, organized that very night a small community, to which was assigned some rich farmland east of the town. And as John Cooper was a skilled agriculturist this organization promised well.

Through all the evening I sat silent and inactive. I was experiencing my first real discouragement. I tried to tell myself that this was but another change of method, and

that we might have to try many more such before we should come to the great solution. Yet I ever returned to the dread questions, Can we lose? Are we losing our fight? Can Harmony fail? I believed that Harmony had come as the desire of all the ages. The youth of me could not believe the world's refusal. Never yet has youth credited the Great Refusals. It is this incredulity which, with all its folly, makes youth so precious in the world.

I met Robert-Dale on Church Street. "The worst of it is," he said to me, "there are so many eccentric people here — abnormals with whom no one will associate under any circumstances and who will not fellowship with each other. I cannot conceive what father will do with them."

It soon became apparent that "father" would have to do nothing less than invite them, require them, one by one, to — get out!

"But," said Robert Owen in whimsical despair, "this is the worst task that ever fell upon me, the worst in all my life!"

I happened one day to see him at it. I was consulting a reference book in the upper library of the great hall when Owen unexpectedly stepped in. River Jordan sat across the table from me.

"Howdy, Mr. Owen," he said, unfolding his lank length from the chair. "I'm glad you've run acrost me."

"Yes? You have wanted to see me?"

"Yes, sirree! I want to tell you this here Community is in a bad way."

"Oh, no; I think you are mistaken about that," replied Owen heartily. "We shall do admirably. Way-breaking is always difficult; but I think we all enjoy it."

"Well, I don't. An' you're on the wrong trail, Mr.

Owen, the wrong trail. Why, looky here. Don't the Bible tell us plain to keep the Sabbath day holy? I don't mean Sunday. I mean the seventh day, Saturday. Can we expect any blessings ef we work on Saturday an' God tellin' us plain as a pikestaff not to?"

"Well, I had not considered that important," began Owen gently.

"No, hit ain't the most important," interrupted Jordan with a loudness that suggested frenzy. "There's something else that's fundamentaller. Hit hez to do with the life o' man. I come here to Harmony, Mr. Owen, because I supposed these here enlightened people would see it.

"Mr. Owen," — he came close, speaking low, emphasizing his words with a slap of his one long palm upon the other, — "Mr. Owen, there's *two* kind of vegetables an', mind ye, one kind grows *above* the ground, beans, pease, an' sich, an' the other" (sepulchrally) "*below* the ground. One is aspirin' — the other delvin' to the lower regions. An' mark what I say — ez long ez ye eat of these here earthy vegetables that point down to hell — ye're goin' to hev earthly thoughts, dissensions, and quarrels. Lord, ain't we had 'em? Can't ye see?"

He stopped for very lack of breath.

"Mr. Jordan," asked Owen calmly, "have you found any persons who are willing to associate with you in a coöperative way upon this basis?"

"Not a one!" roared Jordan.

"I think, then," — Owen hesitated, visibly pained, — "that it would be advisable for you to quit Harmony and go where such are to be found."

"Quit Harmony? Go off? I won't do it! I got as good a right here as anybody!"

"No, because you have quarreled with a number of persons and stirred up dissension among yet others. Besides, no one can live here who will not live on the co-operative plan."

"But I'll live on the coöperative plan. I'll invite any one to try my way."

"Mr. Jordan, I must be firm with you. You must go."

"Then," said Jordan in a rage, "you've got to pay my expenses!"

"No; if I began to do that, I could disperse my whole fortune in useless expenditure."

Owen had yet more conversation before he convinced the troublesome River Jordan that he must go. Jordan at length shot out the door and left Mr. Owen gazing in dismay at me.

"Mr. Way, that was a most painful thing to do," he gasped.

"Yes, and there went an enemy of the System. Jordan has a long tongue."

"It has been most unfortunate that so many impossible people gathered here before I came. I issued the invitation thinking that only here and there would be found one who would care to come to such a place as this. I was curiously overwhelmed. Ten times as many came as I expected. And now this weeding is a desperate business. But," his face brightened suddenly, "we are already feeling the benefit of the weeding. Mr. Way, I never was more hopeful for our Community than at this present moment."

For the first time I could not agree with him. For me there was a lessening light, a cloud settling upon the brightness of our plan. The dread that had entered my heart at the final Community meeting had not once, for all my struggle, loosed its hold.

Meanwhile Jessonda did not recover from her grief as I had hoped. To be sure she took part in the Community work with unchecked ardor. But she was not able to sing for us. Once she valiantly attempted it, but broke down pitifully. I did not again speak to her of my love, for once when she saw it in my face she drew away with such emotion that I saw my time was not yet. I saw that she was still brooding over those delirious words of her grandfather's, that her old hurt from him had received a fresh thrust, and that her disobedience bitterly disturbed her. Knowing her unusual and impulsive way, I could not be sure but that if Giraldi were to appear at this time she might even marry him out of mistaken loyalty to her grandfather. I could only comfort myself with the belief that Giraldi was not likely to appear. By this time he had surely given up his search.

The morning after old Signor Di Baia's death I had found in going back to the cabin some wind-flowers in winter's very lap, and I left them at her door. The next day, though the snows were still with us, I chanced upon a leafing branch, the next day a bunch of violets under the forest mould. As a botanist I knew their haunts. I left them regularly in the morning at Mrs. Chapelsmith's. It seemed a romantic thing to do, but I have learned how in grief some simple, steadfast thing may be of greatest value. She thanked me for them so timidly that I could not know how they pleased her. But once when I omitted them, she came to my schoolroom and asked me for them like a child.

When Mrs. Neef returned from Signor Di Baia's cabin, she had brought with her a small packet which we had not noticed, but which proved to be of great importance.

It contained the legal documents pertaining to the Di Baia estate and Signor Di Baia's will, which gave it all to Jessonda.

The estate was large and had been carefully made ready for her immediate possession. So Jessonda became overnight a person of wealth. If I had lived much in the world this might, perhaps, have disturbed me as a penniless suitor. But as it was, I was only glad for the added independence which it would afford her. In another quarter, however, it occasioned no little commotion. Francis Mailor redoubled his attentions to her.

"Jessonda," I said to her one day, "may I speak to you of a somewhat personal matter?"

She looked at me, startled.

"You will not think that I am — selfish — in this — I am not! I am sure you will understand."

"Bless your heart, yes!" she said with the brightest smile I had seen in many a day.

"It is Mailor. You ought not to be with him so often. He is a dangerous man. And — well, people are talking about it."

"How foolish of them," she said, frowning. "It is only my paper on the negro. He knows much of their life and trials, and seems heartily to detest slavery."

"You are overtrustful."

"And since when have you been the hard suspecter?" she answered, almost fondly. For I am afraid I had the name of being deceived by the most obvious persons.

"I wish you would avoid him," I persisted.

"Then I will," she responded so flatly that it startled me. "I will never do one thing to hurt you more than I must."

CHAPTER LV

IN WHICH JESSONDA LEAVES US

I WAS sitting alone one afternoon in the big room of the mansion when Jessonda came in.

"May I show you my paper on 'Negro Slavery'?" she asked brightly, — "the one I've been working at so hard?"

She had not for some time allowed me the intimacy of such reviewing, and the offer deeply pleased me. I was unfolding the paper when she began to talk in a hurried voice.

"You know what interesting arguments I have had with the Southerners in Macluria, arguments about slavery and emancipation." (A company of Southern people had come up to occupy the Macluria Community and Jessonda had been much with them.) "Of course they do not agree with me at all points, but I think they do finally agree with me that abolition would be a benefit to them — not to the negroes only, but to themselves as well. But I have failed to convince them in the most important matter. You know I hold that a slave can become a free man without loss to his owner. Only by actual experiment can I prove this to them — to the whole South. My paper outlines such an experiment, and I have just determined not only to describe it, but to act upon it."

"That is like you," I said heartily. Even yet I had no inkling of what she was driving at.

"I want to buy a tract of land in the South. You know I have the money now to do that. And I also want to buy

a number of slaves to put on it. I will buy the slaves only with their own consent. Then I will debit each slave with his price and his board and clothing. I will credit him with his labor. The labor I will reckon at the current rate and the articles of consumption at cost. Each day the negro slaves shall receive some schooling in preparation for their becoming free men and women. The slave labor will maintain the establishment. Do you not see how it will work? The moment the debit and credit accounts of any slave balance, he becomes free. Thus my establishment will be a machine which frees slaves mechanically without loss to any one whatever."

"Jessonda, that is masterly!" I cried. "No wonder you have been so absorbed. Even if Southern planters do not at once take it up — and I am afraid they will not — the thing, once demonstrated, is bound to become sooner or later an institution. It will gradually complete the work of emancipation."

I began eagerly to read, but again she stopped me.

"Seth," she said in a queer voice, "I have already bought the land down near Chickasaw Bluffs in Tennessee, and I expect to go there this week."

If utter darkness had clapped upon the clear afternoon, I could not have been more astonished.

"Leave here? Leave Harmony?" I gasped.

"Yes," she hurried on. "I am to have ten trustees, but my own presence will be required."

"Did you get that land through Mailor?" I inquired without intending to do so.

"No, I told you that I would have no dealings with him. It was through the Southerners."

My mind swung back to the main calamity.

"But, Jessonda, you cannot leave Harmony now. Conditions here are serious. I have never put it into words before, but Maclure is most apprehensive. I am very anxious."

"But I am obliged to get away," she said restlessly. "I — I must work unhampered by — by any others. My presence here is not important."

"Don't say that, Jessonda," I said. "You know better than that. There is no woman nor man either who can take your place. Your going would be a great calamity."

Jessonda's grandfather would not have been more shocked at a betrayal of Italy than was I at this apostacy in the hour of Harmony's greatest need.

"This slavery matter," she asserted, "is deeply on my heart. It is the greatest need of the whole country, Seth. Some horror of great conflict will grow out of it if it is not settled."

"But not just yet," I begged. "Not this week. Harmony's crisis may come to-morrow — to-night. Can you not wait a little?"

A curious thought struck me.

"Look here, Jessonda, are you going because of me? Have I been such a down-at-the-mouth fool as to make you feel like this?"

She sprang from her chair as if frightened, and instinctively I sprang from mine.

"Oh, don't — don't!" she cried. "You cannot think such a cruel thing!"

"Because I assure you I am working along comfortably — happily. The Community business —"

"Oh, Seth, do not think such things! You have been so big and quiet — so altogether lovable —"

"Then I wish to God you loved me!" I broke out.

But I was sorry I said this. "Jessonda," I said more quietly, "if you think your going will change me, just put that out of your mind. I cannot change." Even as I spoke the joy and pain of my love for her filled me and I saw her turn away her face from what she saw in mine.

Then quite suddenly she stepped toward me. I thought she would have put herself in my arms.

Some wild, endearing word escaped the door of my lips.

"No, no, no," she cried covering her face. "I must go. Can't you see? I must go!"

So she left me. Despite all she had said, I knew that she was leaving Harmony to get away from me.

CHAPTER LVI

THE PURE COMMUNIST

One of the hardest features of Jessonda's going was that Mailor immediately left town with the boast that Miss Macleod had need of him on her new estate. I did not believe him, but Maclure did, and so I fear did everybody else.

I fell to work madly at my book of mollusks. I left no half-hour of the day unoccupied and worked far into the night.

I tried to keep Lucy Sistaire from working too hard on her illustrations, but she seemed to make it a point of honor to keep pace with me. Already the first volume was printing. The presses worked joyously. The boys of the school were all very proud of turning out so ornamental a book, and Maclure was impatient to post off the first copy to Paris. Maclure had also rigged out a cart which was to peddle my book and other Harmony publications throughout Indiana. I remember that my volume with Lucy's exquisite hand-colored shells sold for one dollar and fifty cents!

"Now, Seth," said Maclure one day, "I suppose that you will ease up on your work."

"No," I said, "I think I'll keep right on. The presses need to be occupied and —"

"Heaven help you, Seth!" he exploded. "Don't imagine you're deceiving me. It's that wretched girl!"

It hurt me keenly to have Jessonda blamed for what was so beyond her mending.

"Don't call her that —" I began.

"I will. She has spoiled the youth and freshness of you. I could thrash her for it."

"She has done nothing — nothing."

"My dear boy, she gave you every reason to expect her love. She treated you abominably. Not only at first, but right along, and now since her grandfather's death. She is an outrageous flirt."

"Oh, no; not Jessonda; she is not in the least like —" I stopped, scarlet.

"Like whom?"

"Well, Amy Roger," I said stoutly. "She was that kind of a girl. But Jessonda —"

"You silly boy — do you suppose that there is only one kind of a flirt?"

"But Jessonda —" I persisted.

"Is merely a different species of the genus," said Maclure. "That's all there is to it! Oh, Seth, Seth, keep to your classifying of shells. The Lord has evidently not gifted you in the other direction." He grew serious. "I spoke of her angrily," he said. "But really I am not blaming the girl. She is curiously constituted. In the first place, she is an original. In her mind nothing passes muster — no established custom or theory — without a pristine inquiry which makes it fundamentally her own."

"But surely you admire that!"

"I do. It is just what makes her as a character so interesting and sincere. But, Seth, such characters think in masses. Jessie Macleod is not thinking of individuals but of nations. She sees in the large. She cannot focus upon *you*. In other words, son, she is impersonal, and will never truly love anything but her own schemes."

I was almost convinced.

"But," I objected, "you seem to be just such an original thinker yourself."

"Yes, and for just that reason I have never married."

I looked at him in amazement. I had always imagined some romance or sorrow back there in the little village of Ayr.

"At least that is one of the reasons," Maclure corrected himself as he turned away.

Maclure had to face me in still another matter. I fear that in those days I was a troublesome son. We had been out upon a short geologizing tour in Kentucky and were now returning.

"My son," he said uncomfortably, "do you realize that you and Lucy Sistaire are very much together?"

"Yes, we have to consult constantly about our book. It's a pleasure to us both."

"That may well be, and for that reason I have not spoken of it. But all the same, it is n't quite right."

I looked at him inquiringly.

"You must remember that in this world of ours even young ladies sometimes fall in love."

"But, Mr. Maclure," I said, horrified, "surely not with me. That is preposterous. Lucy knows — I am afraid everybody knows —"

"Does that make any difference? Would it to you, say, if Jessie Macleod were promised to some one else?"

"No, no!" I interrupted, for the thought was extremely painful to me.

I walked on slowly and came to a regrettable conclusion. "This is a very complicated world," I said miserably.

"Yes," answered Maclure, "a very complicated world!"

On our return we learned that the members of Community Number Four, south of the town, had found their primitive farm labors too arduous and had disbanded, returning the lands to Owen. During the following week another community down the Princeton road followed its example. Robert Owen continued to regard these failures as mere readjustments and at once offered the lands to further experimenters — this time to people whom not a soul in the town could trust. It was a season of wild plans and schemes. One set of people wanted to charter a boat, go up the Ohio, and establish a community near Cincinnati. Others wanted to colonize upon the basis of various religious and fanatical notions.

Maclure all at once lost faith in our success. Perhaps for that very reason I buttressed my own faith with a mighty effort.

"All new movements struggle through such difficulties," I ardently argued. "Think how Christianity seemed to die down for a time. Think of Mohammed's Hegira."

"From our Hegira there will be no returning," he said bitterly.

I went out and offered my services to Robert Owen.

"I'll give up all my scientific work for the time (except the teaching) and devote myself to the communities," I told him. "I will visit them in a friendly fashion and report to you if there are any injustices or real reasons for discontent. I will help with their work here and there. Sometimes a lift at cabin-building or harvesting does a lot to alter a man's social beliefs."

"That's certainly true," he answered heartily. "I wish we had more like you, Seth Way."

As I walked home from Owen's, whom should I come

face to face with on the street but Francis Mailor, no other!

"Well, I'm back, ye see," he announced unnecessarily. He turned to walk with me. "I left all parties well," he added.

I did not ask him what parties.

"I tell you," he broke out boastfully, "this Community is n't a patch to Jessie Macleod's. There we do things business-like. Plenty of niggers, that's what's —"

"We have full accounts of Miss Macleod's work in her letters," I cut him short.

"Oh, I suppose you'll be saying next I have n't been there." He put up his hand conspicuously to stroke his beard — I saw on his little finger a curious ring, a Florentine cameo which Jessonda had constantly worn.

The sight so shocked me that for a moment I could not answer.

"If you were there, Mailor," I said, "I happen to know that it was not with Miss Macleod's consent."

"Oh, you know, do you? You know a lot!" he leered. I escaped from him through the stile at Church Street.

I did not in the least distrust Jessonda, but I knew that Mailor would fling his talk around the town and that her dear name would be bandied about.

As I walked on full of anxious thoughts, my hand was caught and held. "What is the matter, Sir George?" cried a friendly little voice. "Somebody been striking you?"

"Why, Columbine, I don't know but that somebody has, and I guess I got the worst of it."

"You should n't get the worst of it! Not you, Sir George. I wisht folks carried their spears nowadays. I wisht I had a spear!"

"What would you do with a spear, Colley?" I said, indulging her.

She paused in cogitation. "I think I'd hit her with it," she said belligerently. "Yes, I know I would!"

I realized suddenly how tall my little maid was growing. Soon I would not dare to kiss her, and certainly I must not take her on my knee.

"It's not a lady — my enemy, Colley," I said, smiling at her queer turn of thought.

"Oh, have you got another one, too?" was her comment.

"Colley," I said quickly, "let's walk far out on the hills and forget our enemies."

She gave a skip of pleasure. Somehow this child had always the power of brightening the texture of my mind. My anxieties already seemed slighter, more shadowy things.

On the top of Indian Mound she lifted her head with the question: "What is that strange, sweet smell everywhere?"

I sniffed keenly as I used to in the Virginia woods.

"That's forest fires somewhere," I answered. "I can remember when that smell used to fill me with terror."

"Did you see the forest burning?"

Then I began to describe to her those old days — the great roaring enemy from which sometimes we fled and which sometimes we fiercely fought. So interested was I and so livingly did she meet my interest that I came back to town refreshed as with some purer wine.

Robert-Dale met me in front of the Community store. "Seth," he said, in an anxious tone, "do you know that William Pelham is very ill?"

"No. What is the matter?"

"He has been ailing since the last Community meeting, but he had a severe turn this morning."

I hurried to the little upper room where Pelham, not wishing to claim better quarters in the town, had always lodged.

"Seth," he said weakly, "is n't this foolish of me to be giving so much trouble when there is already so much to care for in the town!"

"As if everybody will not rejoice to care for you," said Mrs. Neef, who had just set things to rights and now resigned her post to me. As she left the room Pelham turned toward me.

"Seth," he said despairingly, "can you endure to stay in Harmony now that the Community has died?"

"But it has not died. Mr. Owen is still at work. He can do much."

"Not now—not now. And I was so glad to come here out of the world. I cannot go back to the world. I cannot!"

"But, Pelham, surely you are not thinking to go away. What could we do without you! What would happen to the 'Gazette'!"

"Oh, the 'Gazette'!" he said, almost with tears. "How can I put heart in the 'Gazette' when it is no longer the organ of a Community?"

"Don't talk of it now," I said gently. "You'll feel better about it to-morrow."

But he kept repeating: "Back into the world! What disappointment! What bitter disappointment!"

"Let me read to you," I said, as I had done before. Shelley was then the new poet. Indeed, the leaves of the book from which I read were not cut. Ever since that day

the heavenly lines "To a Skylark" are associated in my mind with that pale, sensitive face upon its pillow and the thin voice whispering, "Back into the world!"

I stayed with Pelham through the night, but next morning devoted myself to my classes. At noon I took a short, imperative rest. Then I hurried to him again.

I met Dr. Price on the stairway. He was very grave. "Our Pelham will not last through the night," he told me.

"What do you mean!" I exclaimed. "There is almost nothing the matter with him."

"That's just it. The trouble lies where medicine cannot reach." There were tears in the doctor's eyes. Harmony drew her true sons very close together. "You know he was frail before he came here, but he had grown perfectly well. He should have lived. It is the death of the Community that is killing him. He is delirious and keeps repeating, 'Back into the world.'"

"But he will be spared that now," I cried, my heart filling. I hurried upstairs longing and yet loath to see the face that we must lose so soon.

The following Sunday among the purple asters of the orchard we buried, without words, our pure Communist — keeping a silent reverence as we knew he would like us to do.

All the way home I seemed to see Shelley's small gray lark in blissful flight against the sunset. Strange phrases are apt to cross and recross the mind when we are in grief; and I kept hearing the words:

> "Thou dost float and run
> Like an unbodied soul whose race is just begun."

If we had had more Pelhams in Harmony, the Community would surely have lived.

CHAPTER LVII

THE GREAT QUARREL

Robert-Dale took over the work of the "Gazette." It seemed strange, indeed, to see him opening Pelham's mail. One day he handed me a letter.

"I think you will like to see this before we publish it in the 'Gazette,'" he said considerately.

It was an account of a lecture which Jessonda had given in Baltimore, written by one who had heard it. Jessonda, having established her colony near Chickasaw Bluffs, had gone to some of the Eastern cities to deliver a series of addresses about it. Her plan of emancipation and her views upon woman's rights were sufficiently unpopular. But she was now adding to these some sharp criticisms of the churches and their theological opinions. Almost everywhere the public was antagonistic, and everywhere Jessonda met with the most furious opposition.

"At Baltimore," so the letter ran, "Miss Macleod's life was threatened if she should appear and speak. She quietly said she thought she knew the American people and that for every riotous fanatic who would hurt her, a hundred citizens would spring to her rescue. She appeared upon the platform. The theater was crowded from pit to dome. She spoke with even more boldness than usual, but such was her courage and eloquence that she was offered no violence."

"But, Robert," I exclaimed, "this is dangerous!" "Some one must protect her — stop her!"

"No, I don't agree with you," answered Robert-Dale. "A woman, in my opinion, has a right to her own ventures, even a right to danger, if she desires to face danger in some fine cause."

I walked away sensible of the rebuke. Had Jessonda been right after all? Was there that in me which was capable of frustrating her deepest purposes? Had I after all been regarding her as my precious possession rather than the possessor of a free will and ideal of her own? Upon this I pondered some hours and came to a rather curious conclusion, which I carefully wrote out, as will hereafter appear.

Francis Mailor's return was in good time for his own advantage and for the Community's further undoing. He contracted to buy fifteen hundred acres of Harmony land. The fact that Owen was willing to sell spoke a secret discouragement which Owen had never hitherto admitted. Where Mailor secured the money for this purchase was a mystery. People openly surmised that Jessie Macleod had advanced it to him. On a certain day the contract was to go into effect, transferring the land and all that was thereon. The night before the transfer the people living on the lower road heard droves of cattle going by. I myself was awakened by the passing of loaded wagons through the town. Next morning it appeared that Mailor had removed to his own portion of land great amounts of the farm supplies and stock.

I cite this only as an instance of the many ways in which Owen was cheated. Why he or his sons did not fight this theft, I cannot imagine. But they did not. It affords me, however, great satisfaction to record that Mailor ended his days in the Ohio Penitentiary.

Several days later Aunt Sammy, herself the embodiment of Rumor, met me with the statement, "Mr. Owen is goin' off to Europe, Mr. Way."

"Oh, no, Aunt Sammy," I answered; "that's impossible. I would n't repeat that if I were you. You don't want to injure the town."

I thought best to tell Mr. Owen of this report so that he might contradict it.

"But," said Robert Owen quietly, "it is true. I start next week for Liverpool."

"Oh, no!" I cried tragically. "Everything will go to pieces if you leave."

"By no means. Harmony's mutations have taught me that the proper method of community-founding is in small groups — small groups. I must try it now at once in England."

It was with him as with Milton's shepherd, —

"To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

"But the people call these mutations failures," I exclaimed. "They are discouraged by them. I am discouraged!"

"My dear boy, you must not be so. Robert-Dale is here and William. I am leaving all my sons here. I have started the Community now on the right basis. They have only to give it a little guidance."

And who was I to tell him that, without his own magnetic personality to hold them, the people would melt away like a morning mist?

"At one time the Community was in danger," said Owen, — "at the first when I invited *all*, and the people overwhelmed me."

He had perhaps named the real cause of our ruin.

"But," he added, "I have purged the Community. Now all will be well."

I saw that Robert Owen was incorrigible in hope. So clear was his dream to himself that it blotted out the steps to its accomplishment. His sons told me long afterward that when he was dying — half his body already cold in death — he was planning for "a meeting next week which will certainly help humanity."

"But, Mr. Owen," I ventured, "men are saying that you have invested four fifths of your fortune here. Surely — pardon me for seeming to say so much — surely a man of your financial ability could save much by staying now."

"Perhaps," he said, "perhaps. But meanwhile in England this golden chance to further humanity and brotherly love would be lost!"

As he spoke, his eyes rekindled. I think I never loved him more than at this moment when he gave this foolish answer and when his great human love welled up for me to see. He radiated that love. It was not an opinion, but a passion, and he always acted upon it as instinctively as other men act upon personal greed. He was turning away, almost childishly, from the chance to rescue his fortune. I think he never really believed that men would steal from him. Owen's love of his fellows was as complete a fabric of trust as a girl's. Curiously innocent he was, and unspotted from the world.

"But there is another matter," Owen went on, "which as poor Jordan said, is 'fundamentaller.' Mr. Way, I have been bitterly disappointed in the conduct of our Educational Society — our schools."

"Not Mr. Maclure!" I said.

But Owen went on: "Every community must have some empowering ideal — otherwise it is the mere husk of a social life. That controlling ideal is usually religion. Mine is Education, Enlightenment. The children here were to have been so educated as to embody visibly in themselves the peace and happiness of the new living."

(I recalled New Lanark. This was not an idle boast. Owen had already done it.)

"I brought here men of genius intending that the whole body of Community children should be moulded and enlightened by them. Bright children and dull — rich and poor alike. This educational society was to be the center of my Community life, reacting upon the parents and making the children the true Communists of the future. But Maclure, strangely enough, has allowed his brilliant teachers to form small, exclusive groups of pupils. The majority of my children do not receive the fine enlightenment. The result is, of course, jealousy and bitterness."

"Yes," I said sorrowfully, "that is true."

"You see that," said Owen eagerly. "Your opinions have weight with Maclure. Perhaps you could quietly persuade him to change this."

"Then stay," I pleaded, "until all this is accomplished."

"Seth Way," he said, his eyes filling with affection, "I believe you are as true a lover of The Principles as are my own sons."

"I am, I am," I cried. "But Harmony is failing and I cannot make you see." I turned from him quickly, for my heart was filling with a bitterness which I thought I should taste to my life's end.

On the street I met Lesueur. "Oh, Seth Way," he

greeted me, "I hope you are not thinking to depart — as so many."

"No. Where should I go?"

"I am sorry the Neefs are going. Their presence means so much for the town."

"My darling Columbine," I thought. "Am I to lose you also?"

"Quiñones, already he is gone," pursued Lesueur. "He and his pupils. But little Caprioli — he break away and came running back. Madame Frétageot take him in and give him to eat."

"Good for Carlo!" I cried. "But you, Mr. Lesueur?"

"Me? Oh, I shall stay. We can make a happy town with our scientific work together, even without a Community. You, Maclure, and I, — and young David-Dale. Indeed, all the Owen sons will be a power after a few years."

"Yes, yes," I said. But I was not listening. I was noting a knot of excited people gathered in front of "No. 2." They were jostling each other to see.

I came up, and the sight they were looking at took the breath out of my body. It was a placard tacked against the wall thus:

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to all whom it may concern — forewarning them not to trust Robert Owen on my account, as I am determined not to pay any debts of his, or in any way be responsible for any transaction he may have done or may attempt to do in my name.

WILLIAM MACLURE.

"What does this mean?" I cried.

"I dunno," said Amos Twiney. "There's more of them posters. They're all over the town."

I ran across the street and into our mansion school.

As I approached Maclure's door, I heard a book slammed down on the table. But when I entered he was at the far end of the room staring at nothing out of the window. He was white with anger. I could only be thankful that this time it was not against me.

"What does it mean?" I cried.

"That notice? It means that I'm fair outdone wi' the mon." His speech was blurred with Scotch.

"With Robert Owen?"

"Yes, yes. Everybody, every bairn in the streets knows the Community is done for. But Owen won't acknowledge it. He is like a rock — like a mule. Deliver me from a Welshman when he's once made up his mind."

"Oh, but you did not quarrel?"

"Quarrel with him! No, no, I just stamped around like a colt on a rope and he smiled — smiled — kept smiling — *and* refusing."

"Refusing what?"

"Why, to give me the deed in fee-simple to my own property so that I can run my school as I like. Our deed reads, 'To be used forever for Community purposes. Forever! Bah!" He stopped in a fume. "But," he went on, "I must have my property free to use. I hope you agree with me, Seth."

I did, but my heart was so broken to have my two heroes at loggerheads that I could make only a dull assent.

"But, Mr. Maclure, your notice is only about the paying of debts. As — as if you cared for money," I faltered.

"I paid George Rapp large sums on the land which Owen and I bought together. Owen owes me forty thousand dollars."

"Does n't Owen acknowledge it?"

"No. But he shall acknowledge it. I am having him arrested."

"My God! Mr. Maclure, don't do anything like that! If you two cannot reach an agreement, we must have a board of arbiters between you. I'll go out now and ask any persons you name. It can all be settled peaceably; I know it can!"

Maclure's face changed. I seemed suddenly to have taken the lead. "I wish you would, Seth," said he. "I have been greatly distressed."

I crossed over to him, but he went on speaking:

"You forget, son, that I went through this same thing in Spain only a few years ago. There a rotten government finally confiscated everything. I am weary, weary, and I've tried hard to do good!"

"Of course you are weary. Leave it with me. The matter is not beyond adjusting. It can be done."

"Ask whom you will, son," he said. And I went out leaving him still by the window with bowed head.

I found Owen's retaliatory notice already posted. It was characteristic.

NOTICE

Having just now seen the very extraordinary advertisement put upon some of the houses of this place, and signed by William Maclure, it becomes necessary in my own defense to inform the public that the partnership between William Maclure and myself is in full force, and I shall pay any contract made either by William Maclure or myself on the partnership account.

Robert Owen.

CHAPTER LVIII

IN WHICH I DO SOME THINKING

It was late before I completed my Committee of Arbiters for the morrow. I returned slowly through the deserted streets. I was thinking, sentimentally, I fear, of the past days — of Jessonda, of all that wonderful life which must now be closed.

In a brightly lighted back room of one of the larger buildings, I saw that a number of people were somewhat hilariously assembled. It was a hot September night and, everything being open, I could hear their voices as I passed.

"Won't it be fun to see old Owen squirm!" I heard a familiar voice say.

"See here, boys" (Paul Brown's voice), "I've got an inscription for the coffin:

"Here lies a Cobweb of Fairy Dream."

"Nobody'll understand that," said the first voice. "Jist put it:

"Dead Communism
Killed by Kindness."

"How many mourners hev you got fer the funeral?"

"Oh, about fifty." (Paul Brown again.) "Some of the band fellows have promised to play a dirge. We'll march down Main Street and back and along Church Street to the great hall. A funeral of the Social System! Lord, what rot it all was!"

I stepped back into the shadow. Alas! that our beautiful world-hope should end in a travesty — a trivial, loutish joke! I waited miserably until they blew out the lights and came flocking noisily into the open. I was thankful to see that they were only the rowdier spirits of the town.

Then I went over to my familiar woodhouse, got my axe, came back to the building. (Doors are never, even now, locked in Harmony. "Just pull it to," is the admonition at night.)

I went in and chopped the coffin with its big, painted inscription into kindling wood, burned the pall in the fireplace, and tore the blasphemous garlands to shreds.

I could no more have spent that night within doors than in a prison cell. It was a breathless night. No one should have been indoors.

I crossed to the steeple house yard. Here I had passed my first happy night in Harmony. It was a cool, pleasant spot with trees. I lay down, but I could not sleep. The question was knocking at my brain: "*Why had we failed? Why had we failed?*"

Even yet it seemed preposterous that we should have failed. I began to recount the reasons for failure. Those reasons which now everybody was so glib to name:

Too little knowledge of farming.

But we had had a great many excellent farmers.

The overrush of fault-finding, cranky workers.

Yes, but now these had been sent away.

The equal pay of all — diligent and dilatory, skilled artisan and unskilled laborer.

This certainly had lost us many good workers and indeed tended to eliminate them altogether. It was a serious defect.

Owen's absences.

Yes, Owen's frequent absences had done much to demoralize the Community. He alone was its creator. He alone could possess the ideal in its fullness, or, like any other creator, mould his material into the body of his vision. There was a curious, compelling quality in that human affection of his. It was ennobling, contagious, enough in itself to keep a whole community alive. He should never have left Harmony at all, not even in the hands of his most capable lieutenants, until the Community was solidly established. The experiment was important enough to be supremely worth his while.

The Principles themselves — of common property, equal pay, free speech, universal and high education; were these principles impossible? Could they not stand the first strain of use?

What a question for a young devotee — the question of my entire faith! Resolutely I faced it.

Yes, impossible. As we were constituted and circumstanced, the principles were impossible.

But it ought not to have been so. The Community abounded in elements of success, and under Robert Owen's constant master hand it could have lasted many years. It should have been, at the outset, a strictly selected society, and should have become inclusive slowly — as the strong, initial characters moulded the newcomers. But the thing had gone wrong. The Community had failed. Such an attempt had never been made be-

fore (this I believed) and would never be attempted again.

These were the thoughts that came to me that sleepless night in the steeple house yard. And they spelled despair.

As I completed the round of them, my mind swung back to Jessonda. To me she was the embodiment of all noble effort and friendly life. The Community had seemed to die at her going, even as it was now really dying at the departure of its founder.

At thought of Jessonda I buried my face in the grass like a homesick boy. The very look of her flashed across me — her face, her bright, unusual gesture, her beloved voice. My last news of her was from a letter to William, a sort of essay upon Public Prejudice. She had cited, in the most impersonal way and as a mere instance of this trait in humankind, that the platform on which she was trying to speak had been demolished, that her carriage had been attacked and almost overthrown, by the mob. But "prudent, resolute men" had led the horses, repeating, "Steady! Steady!" and had brought her to her hotel in safety. I was proud as I read of this scene. Yet, strive as I might, I could not regard the incident quietly. Now, in this troubled night, my anxiety returned with force and deeply disturbed me. I wanted myself to be the "prudent, resolute man" to protect Jessonda in her noble adventure. But I knew too well that she did not desire my protection. Was it not to get away from me that she had left Harmony? Yes, these days I had grown to understand Jessonda better and to know how fundamental in her was this sort of activity. Jessonda was a novel type of woman. In this lay her hardship. She could not fit into the old

niches which women are supposed to occupy. To her, wifehood would be only an added burden. I had no right so to burden her, even though she should consent. But she would not consent.

It was well toward morning before I went to my room and fell asleep. I awoke late and unrefreshed, nor did my anxiety for Jessonda lift with the day as mostly night fears do, but rather deepened. And I had one of those chills so common in Harmony, with a slight fever afterward.

That afternoon the Committee of Arbitration met with Owen and Maclure in the greenhouse office. As a result of their conference Owen transferred to Maclure the full title to the educational property with no Community restrictions as to its use. But a careful casting-up of the accounts showed that my benefactor owed Robert Owen a balance of about five thousand dollars. How either of them could have been so far out in his reckoning, I cannot imagine, for I know little of such matters.

At the close of the business I saw Owen and Maclure shake hands with a heartiness which meant no less than the full restoration of their friendship — which was so precious to me and to the town.

CHAPTER LIX

AN UNREASONABLE RIDE

As we came out from our conference, Robert-Dale handed me another letter, from Jessonda, dated from her estate at Chickasaw. It was largely for publication in the "Gazette," but at the close stood a hasty postscript:

I am coming north to Albion to interest Mr. George Flower in my Chickasaw Colony. I shall, of course, visit New Harmony afterward. I am sorry to hear of the upheavals in the Community. Hope they are composed by now. I expect to be in Harmony by October fourth.

"But," I said, a little breathless from the sudden joy, "this letter has been long delayed. It is now the ninth. She must be in Albion now."

"Yes, I should think so," Robert answered, smiling, "and at any moment here in Harmony."

I walked away upon air — certainly not upon solid ground. I called at both the Green and the Yellow Taverns, and at Mrs. Chapelsmith's, in the bare hope that her dear haunts already knew her again. How unreasonable now seemed my fears for her. Jessonda was no longer braving mobs in hostile cities. She was near at hand — safe in the house of Mr. Flower, whom we all knew so well.

Coming back I met Robert-Dale once more.

"Did you ever experience such heat in October?" he asked.

I marveled how any one could complain of such a trifle as the weather.

"It is often like this," I answered. "Don't you remember last year?" For in Harmony Indian summer is no make-believe summer, but a real second season, as long as the first summer and almost as hot. It never rains. One golden day succeeds another until Christmas.

"It would be all right if it were not for this smoke," said Robert.

"It is very smoky," I admitted. For all day long the sun had hung, a dim ball in the sky. "Lesueur tells me that there are forest fires near about, and that perhaps some of the prairies are burning."

The following day, to my annoyance, my unreasonable concern for Jessonda returned. About noon young Richard Flower arrived at the mill with a load of grain and told us that Miss Macleod was in Albion visiting his wife. This news but served to give me the wild impulse to hurry to her. I saw now that I was really in a fever and took one of those huge doses of quinine which were sanctioned in those days for malaria. The quinine served only to give me a headache. It certainly did not cheer me. The same anxiety deepened, until I could hardly give attention to my teaching. I was constantly sensible of Jessonda as being shadowed by some horror of dread which I felt like pushing off with my hands. All night I tossed. I had fully determined not to act upon such foolish suggestions, for I could easily trace their origin to my distresses and anxieties and to my actual illness.

About four o'clock in the morning I suddenly leaped from my bed. I could endure it no longer. I dressed in breathless haste, groped my way to the stable, saddled

my horse and started for Albion. Once in the bottomland I could not refrain from galloping.

I kept telling myself that I should find Jessonda playing with the Flower children, that she would laugh at me. She would by no means be pleased at my impulsive coming. But I only hurried the faster.

I roused the ferryman, who grumblingly set me over the Wabash. He asked me who was sick, but I pretended not to hear.

I had now to make my way across the so-called Fox Island, all canebrake with a road running deeply through it for five or six miles. I forded the shallow Fox River on the farther side and made my way up across the bottomland to the higher level. Here I saw plainly a dull glow all across the distant sky. The smoke began to sting my nostrils, and I wondered if I might not have some difficulty in getting to Albion. But the woods ahead of me were so thick that it was hard to tell just where the fires were.

It was almost noon when I came out to the edge of the woods where the prairie broadly opened out. Here at last I saw the destroyer. The prairie to the north and east was on fire as far as the eye could reach — a low wall of flickering tongues and white smoke. Fortunately my road lay across the southern edge of the prairie.

Mr. Richard Flower's house was at the farther side near the town of Albion. At the gate I flung myself from my horse. Everybody was hurrying to and from the brook with pails of water, filling every available receptacle. Young Mrs. Flower was hard at it among the rest. Her little girl pulled at her skirt.

"Mother, mother," I heard the child cry; "don't keep

carrying buckets! Why don't you ask God to stop the fire?"

"You go ask Him, dearie," said the distracted woman, "I'm busy."

"Where is Miss Macleod?" I called to her.

"She went over to father's yesterday and she must have stayed." Mrs. Flower was already hurrying, breathless, into the house in search of more receptacles.

I sprang into the saddle and was off again. I felt a great relief. I expected to turn to and help the Flowers so soon as I should see Jessonda. The elder Flower's house was a quarter of a mile farther on. Here, too, I found them busy fetching water.

"Where is Miss Macleod?" I asked once more.

"Dunno; ask Mr. Flower." This from a hurrying farm-boy.

I sought out the old gentleman, who had lighted a protective fire before his dooryard and with several helpers was controlling it by beating it with clapboards.

"She's gone to Squire Beckley's," he shouted between strokes.

"Where's that?"

"Across English Prairie — to the north."

My fears shut suffocatingly upon me. I caught his arm. "When did she go?"

"Oh, she is all right," he shouted back through the heavy blows of the boards.

"But I must know!"

The old man kindly stopped and led me off from the rest. "Look here," he said, "can I trust you to keep a confidence?"

"Yes, yes."

"Well, an escaping negro appeared here yesterday afternoon from Kentucky. He wanted to get to Squire Beckley's who helps them on. There was no one here to show him the way, and Miss Macleod volunteered to go with him."

"When?" I interrupted.

"Oh, early yesterday morning. She had more than time to get there before the fire shut across."

"But did you let her go out with a negro there on the open prairie?" I queried angrily.

"The man was known to good friends of mine. Besides, he was mad with fear and haste. His master was hot after him."

My wild fears had been right. "You see!" they triumphed within me. "We warned you! We warned you!"

"Can you give me a fresh horse?"

"Young man, you are not going after her!"

"I certainly am! If there is no fresh horse, I'll take my own! Only hurry!"

"Are you crazy? The girl was safe at Beckley's before the fire broke out. Now all the ways are cut off!"

"I know she is not safe!"

"How do you know?"

My eyes fell. I had the grace to be ashamed of my visionary warnings. But I had no power to disregard them.

"Never mind now. Have you the horse?"

The old man went silently into his barn and searched. There was no horse. All were out upon urgent needs.

"It's the most useless 'bravado' I ever heard of," he said. "You'll never get through."

But I was tightening the girths upon my wearied animal, and did not answer him.

CHAPTER LX

OUT UPON THE PRAIRIE

Out upon the great primitive space of the prairie, enveloped in its smoky menace, I was suddenly aware how foolish was this stubborn quest. I was blindly following the road which Jessonda had taken yesterday across the prairie north to Squire Beckley's. How could I doubt that she had safely got there? She was in no need of me. She was not in the plain — but Death was! What occasion had I to face him? And what a wickedness to plunge Maclure — and Jessonda too — into horrors over me by the pursuit of a foolish impression!

But as I started to turn my horse back, the fearful certainty returned and I resumed my gallop forward along the deserted road. A wall of smoke with its low-playing stars now stretched in a vast semicircle to the north and east. English Prairie was surrounded by woods and in places these, too, were afire, sending up solemn rolls of smoke against the sky. The prairie itself was dotted here and there with little groves, which only aided the flames, for they were very dry.

I passed the log house of Mr. Orange. It was quite deserted. They had not dared to stay and save it. A great wind swept into my face. The long grasses ran away from it behind me like waves of a sea. In this wind the fire could outchase a galloping horse. And I was galloping toward it — fool that I was! I remembered how in the spring I had passed through this prairie, — then a riot of flowers, — my horse's legs crimson to the knees with

wild strawberries. Now this grass seemed never to have been alive. It rattled. It was as high as my horse's back, and the road ran through it like a trench.

I passed another cabin. That, too, was abandoned. "Fool! Fool!" I muttered aloud, but I urged my horse on. I could no longer bring him to a run. Poor beast, he was very near the end of his strength. He began to sense his danger and neighed shrilly. The wind now met me warm and so full of smoke that my horse and I alternated in coughing. Legions of little birds were flying from the fire. The whole air was a vast menace.

The flames must have covered a thousand acres at once, and were now rushing down upon me like an army under this swift wind. The grandeur of the sight fascinated me. I seemed to have come out merely for this great experience of it — I alone on the plain! I could hear it now — a voice of power.

I came to a deserted camp-meeting grove. It stood midway in the prairie, with its broken benches, old hitching-sheds, and its pulpit with the space before it where convicted sinners were wont to fall down shrieking and hysterical. Beyond the pulpit was the convenient creek for baptisms.

And there near the creek — *I saw her!*

I was as greatly amazed as Mr. Flower would have been. There she was in the flesh as I had so often seen her in dreams — dear, lovable, unbelievable always.

She had wrapped her long riding-habit around her, had lighted her little grass fires on both sides of the creek, and was industriously beating it away from the camp grove. Her horse was tethered near by. I had leaped down beside her before she saw me.

"Seth!" she cried, starting up; "are you sent — always?"

I thought she meant it as though I were not desired. "I am this time," I said.

"Why are you not on your horse?" I asked her.

"She went lame. I started back from Squire Beckley's early this morning."

I looked toward the great, crackling clouds of gray with their flames darting hither and yon.

"You can get across to Black's Millpond on my horse," I said. "But you must hurry. I can take care of myself here."

"Seth Way!" she flashed back, "if your horse takes me, he'll have to take you too."

"I won't have that," I cried roughly. "He is too worn to carry both. There's not time to argue."

Surely the fire had wings. A tiny clump of timber half a mile away in front of us intervened between us and the fire. The fire was still some distance from it. Yet even as I spoke the highest tree of the clump was suddenly wrapped in a thin white veil and quivered like a ghostly bride. Then all in an instant it sparkled at every twig, and burst into a sheet of flame.

"Too late," I said. "We must fight it here together."

"That is good!" she answered.

I hurriedly put my horse into a cabin and shut the door. Jessonda's horse, with a bitter cry, broke away, ran stumbling, fell, and I could see it no more for the smoke.

Hastily I lighted other fires in the grass from Jessonda's to enlarge our circle of safety. To our right stood the pulpit, lonely in the wind and smoke. Behind us was the creek, a mere rill now ankle-deep. In front of us was

the terrible, swaying cloud of fire. Having touched the distant tiny clump, the flames ran like torrents through. Some trees fell almost immediately; others we could see standing like pillars of fire, casting forth sparkles of light. Their branches crashing down strewed the smoky ruins.

That was the wingéd fire.

The creeping fire flashed and flickered on the ground on every side as far as the eye could reach.

My face began to grow dry with the heat. I ran to Jessonda.

"Come," I said, "we have done all we can. We must get into the creek now."

Her face was black with grime and smoke. But I did not see that; I saw only the brave knowledge in her eyes. I made her kneel and dashed her head, shoulders, and dress with water from the muddy rill. She helped me do the same for myself. Then we took our places side by side in the baptismal water. Our baptism was to be of fire.

Flocks of quail and doves rushed through the air above us crying in the smoke. A herd of deer leaped past and a motley company of rabbits, coons, and a catamount — all perfectly unwary of each other. A copperhead snake crept near our feet as harmless as the doves. Never before or since have I had opportunity to observe one alive so accurately.

Jessonda's great eyes fixed themselves on the dead pulpit and the kneeling-place. "Those people would have prayed," she said softly.

"But you will not fail — not fail," I said in a passion of tenderness for that clear look of un-fear in her face.

"No," she answered with bowed head.

She spoke again like a wondering child. "In a few minutes we shall know."

I could not answer her.

"Perhaps it will be nothingness after all?"

"No, we shall remain." It was as though something spoke for me. I had not believed thus a moment ago.

What a sound we heard now! — like some powerful, deep organ played by those sheets of flame — the voicing of immeasurable strength.

It was hard to crouch there idle — much harder than while we had worked at our backfires. It was a cruel, miserable death that called to us now so near. Suddenly, under the vast threat, she moved closer to me, and as I would have placed my arm about little Columbine, I put my arm around her. But I felt her tremble and my heart melted.

"You must not die," I cried out, "you with your powers and strength. I am an idiot — wicked, damnable — not to save you." I had some wild idea that I could save her — if only I wished it enough.

"But you, too, Seth?"

"Even if I lived, I could n't save Harmony. It is you — you that matters!"

I think she answered me, but I did not hear her. I believe that in that moment I began to pray for Jessonda. I did not know that I was praying. Perhaps my Quaker blood taught me. Perhaps — but I don't know what to say about it. My whole being began to pour itself forth in a rhythm of pleading which suddenly grew greater than myself — wide as that great organ voice all about us.

And straightway the flame before me began to be

rhythmic too. It grew bright and brighter with a light which I knew (though how I knew it I do not know) was not of sense, but was Light in its spiritual form. A great expectation of gladness came upon me. I could not bear to look at the light — yet I could not look away. For I strangely knew that presently the light would become Person, and that when it did I should die of joy.

Then — but here I cannot describe, I can only overlay with words — the Light seemed to lean toward me, it swept through me. It was tender with some Infinite Knowing of me. It was vast as the sky. It blessed me until I could hardly bear the blessing. I forgot that I had asked for anything; I knew only the joy of the Presence that was there.

The roar of the fire had been such that neither of us had noticed the dying away of the wind. I believe that for some time the air had been perfectly still, presaging a storm.

Suddenly a new wind swept up from the west — the quick wind, precursor of wet clouds, clouds which, of course, we could not see. It struck the flames aback. For a moment the fire stood hesitant, erect in air — then it bent, rolled backward like a panic — black smoke upon the black ground behind.

I cannot believe that any prayer of mine changed it. I only know that my ecstasy and the change were simultaneous and that both proceeded from some vast, unseen action which I do not understand.

I was but a grain of dust in that great action. Yet such is the quality of Infinite Knowledge that it seems to concern itself as intimately with the smallest atom as with the greatest world.

CHAPTER LXI

THE BETTER VIEW

JESSONDA was kneeling in the water by me — for I found myself upon my knees. Tears of relief were running down her face.

"Seth," she said gently, "it was n't death after all."

"No, it is life," I replied, strangely knowing that it was a new life infinitely deep and full of meanings, which I with my scientific habits had never sensed before. In a daze I brought out my horse, set Jessonda upon him, and took the bridle to walk at his head.

"You should be riding, too," she suggested.

"No, the horse is too tired for both," I said.

We started back upon the altered road. Jessonda lifted her bare face to the rain and I heard her breathe deep with delight as the voiceful thunder rolled above us. Where we went the ground was black and hissing to the rain. I perceived that we had already been cut off, there in our camp-ground, when the change came.

We plodded on in silence, solemnized by the near touch of death. We were yet looking through dazed eyes upon this common afternoon. The rain finally ceased, leaving the plain youthfully refreshed, for by this time we had passed beyond the region of the fire.

We came to where a little track struck off southeast from the main road. We both knew whither it led. She leaned forward in the saddle.

"Seth," she said with emotion, "let us go straight to Harmony."

"You know how rough this path is," I remonstrated.

"Yes, but I want to go straight there."

I turned the horse down the narrow way. Her mood was mine, we could not face the people in Albion. Sometimes I pushed breast-high against the grass, sometimes thrust the cane from before her with my hands. I constantly had the picture of Joseph leading back from Egypt — which was certainly a foolish thought, for I was not aged nor had she a child in her arms. Most of all, she did not belong to me.

We left the prairie and came into the great woods.

"Seth," she said, breaking the silence timidly, — it was hard even yet to speak of those moments of dread, — "when we stood there in the creek, why did you say it made no difference whether you lived or not, because Harmony was dead? Do you care for Harmony so much as that?"

I bowed my head in answer.

"But Harmony is n't the world," she said.

"It was my world."

"But, Seth, Harmony cannot fail — not like that."

"You have n't seen it, Jessonda."

"I saw a good deal of ruin before I left, and Robert-Dale has written me. But surely you must know that even all that does n't mean real failure."

"What else can it mean? Everything that we have attempted has failed — our communal living, our trust in each other, our renouncement of personal gain."

"Oh, but don't you see?" Her voice took on an awakening ring. "Harmony has uttered all those good truths, and the world has heard them. The world, of course, hits back, but it cannot forget."

"Why not? The world has forgotten many things."

"No, it has remembered many things. All history shows that."

"I know so little history," I said ruefully.

"Yes — you are of the new, unhistoried world and the forest," she answered softly. "But, Seth, I — I know the old world. I have traveled it up and down. I find that almost every little town of Europe has produced its great man —its Galileo, Columbus, Savonarola, Huss, and that sweet miracle of humanity, Joan of Arc. All of them died failures, poor or in prison. The world killed most of them, you know, — and, oh, dear!" she exclaimed in young enthusiasm. "Anyway, the silly old world has got beyond *killing* such people. They don't kill Robert Owen for his speeches and schemes nor Robert-Dale nor Maclure, nor you, Seth Way!"

"What on earth would they kill me for?" I tried to say. But she was talking too fast to hear me.

"And you men *are* the town; and even if they did kill you, they could n't kill what you have done."

I looked up into her dear, eager face. What she said seemed to swing me away from that last bitter week into a clearer atmosphere.

"Tell me," I said hungrily, "what you think we have done. Will anything be remembered?"

"Be remembered — yes," she said quickly. "The schools of Harmony, first of all. They are not closed and will go on for years. The manual training, the equal teaching of girls as well as boys, your new study of nature — of birds, flowers, and of your own splendid rocks. And most of all, the new listening attitude of mind which all this science begets. We need all this so sorely in this

new land. Even profit-sharing — Harmony has uttered that, and it will spring up again as from scattered seed. As for Harmony Town itself — oh, you need not fear for it! The big friendliness of its early dream will place a stamp upon the town which will outlast you and me, Seth Way." She broke her own high enthusiasm with a joyous, shy laugh. "You'll see!" she ended girlishly.

She had got the larger view. I had worked too close to the task and had lost it.

A little later we met Richard Flower riding as for life back to Albion. He gave us one look.

"Great God!" he cried. "Where have you two been?"

"We've been in the fire," said Jessonda.

"Fire! You're both soaked with mud."

"The creek did that, and the rain," I answered.

"Albion's burned to the ground," he cried. "What have you heard about it?"

"Albion is all right," I comforted him. "I was with your father this morning."

"Are you sure?"

"I'm sure it was not burned from the prairie. You'll find they are all safe."

"Thank Heaven, I met you!"

"Tell your father we are safe," I called after him, for he was already dashing on, unable to give down from his high excitement.

For a while we made on in silence. Then she questioned me again.

"Seth, how did you know I was out there in the prairie?"

I could not answer.

"Won't you tell me?" she asked again.

"I can't tell you," I said, very low. "I knew that you were in danger. All day yesterday I knew it. But no one told me. Something drove me until I came to you. Something that would not allow you to be killed."

I continued on in silence, my hand upon the horse's neck. "I wish I could unsay such a foolish statement," I added, "but I can't."

Suddenly I felt her hand over mine. This astonished me, for Jessonda was never familiar. I looked up and when I saw her eyes bright with tears, I drew her hand down and kissed it. I was sorry for this, the next moment, for I had no right to presume upon her gratitude.

Toward night we came to a little cabin where — quite as on our old journey — we found welcome and shelter. I, wrapped in a blanket, slept like a log on the ground until the following noon. Then we went onward, happy in our journeying, though a heavy rain fell throughout the afternoon.

It was after nightfall when we arrived at Mrs. Chapelsmith's. Jessonda dismounted, and I opened the little low gate for her. But she strangely lingered.

"Get yourself dry clothes and then rest," I said. "This has been a terrible strain. I hope you will not be ill."

"I am never ill," she said quietly.

And yet she lingered. She seemed in a kind of dream. Wind-tossed and mud-stained as she was, there was a new beauty about her which I seemed never to have seen before. She was younger, more childlike. I found myself wondering if death coming so near could have given her something of its heavenly change.

"You had better make haste, Jessonda," I said at last. "You know both you and I are hardly fit to be seen."

Suddenly she looked into my face with a most strange and lovely expression. "Seth," she said, "I want to see you in the morning. Can you meet me in the labyrinth?"

Then, before I could answer, she turned and ran into the house. To my dismay I realized that if she had not done so, I would have taken her in my arms and kissed her many times without any reason or permission.

CHAPTER LXII

IN THE LABYRINTH

NEXT morning I was called up early by Robert-Dale. Feiba Pevelli — now our only surviving Community — had decided to discontinue, buy its lands of Owen, and divide them up among its members. William and David Owen were away. Robert-Dale was just starting out on urgent business to Mount Vernon, and he begged me to take charge of matters.

"But, Seth Way," he said, "what's this I hear from John Chapelsmith, about you and Jessie Macleod being in the fire and your saving her?"

"I did not save her. I — I — happened to be there — and — then the rain came."

I hoped that Jessonda was not saying anything of the kind. I did not want her to be grateful to me for something which I could not help and for which I deserved no credit.

After breakfast I hurried out to Feiba Pevelli. There was much to do — settling the values of the farms, and deciding what movable property belonged to Owen, its values, and so forth. Where there were differences of judgment it was not possible to come quickly to just and fair agreements.

I remembered my appointment with Jessonda at the labyrinth, but I could not get away nor could I find any one to carry a message to her. It was two o'clock before I was through. As I came back I stopped on an errand at the tavern.

There was a stranger at the desk asking questions. Visitors were always coming to Harmony, but I was sorry to have one now. He could only look upon our trouble, and he would doubtless go away and put us in a book, for I could see that this one was of that kind — a man of certainty and power, with a black mustache and lips so red as to give a suggestion of tropical blood. He was foreign and spoke a broken English.

"You say the Community is break — ondone — you call it — that many have gone already away and this person also?"

"Yes, oh, six months ago."

"*Gran Dio!* And to where?"

"She's founded another community in the South."

But here Aunt Sammy (of all people!) intervened. "You askin' about Jessie Macleod? Why, she's hyar. She come last night. She 's at Mrs. Chapelsmith's."

I started at this mention of Jessonda.

The man turned at once to Aunt Sammy. "How do you know?"

"Victor Duclos, he seen 'er this mornin'. An' he tole Jimmy Beal and Jimmy tole me."

The man had an aristocratic way of not listening to the answers of his own questions.

"Is there a porter — a messenger to be had in this place? I wish to be taken to the lady at once."

"Fur's that is," said Aunt Sammy, "I'll porter ye."

Not until this moment did it fully dawn upon me who this stranger was — Adriano Giraldi — none other. Melodrama might be all very interesting on the playboards, but I found it revolting in real life.

He was giving his portmanteau to the tavern-keeper

when I started at a run for Jessonda. I must get to her first with some warning. But what would she do? I could form no idea. Her ideals of conduct were so unexpected. Her foolish talk of loyalty at old Di Baia's death certainly meant something at the time. What might it mean now?

"No," said Mrs. Chapelsmith at her door; "Jessie went over to the mansion school right after breakfast."

I hurried across to the school, only to learn that Miss Macleod had taken a big book and gone out to Indian Mound; said she might walk from there to the river.

I started for Indian Mound. Clear of the town I broke into a run and on the hilltop called her name, and getting only the bleating of sheep for answer, I went down to the river. And here at last I remembered the labyrinth and her appointment with me. But that had been hours before. Surely she would not be there still!

I stumbled back across meadows, vineyards, and brooks, came at last to the labyrinth, and impatiently threaded its ways. The flutter of a white frock in the doorway of the little *Gartenhaus* gave me the good token, and I burst in upon her.

"Jessonda!" I cried breathlessly. "That man Giraldi — he is in Harmony looking for you everywhere!"

"Not Adriano! Not now!"

"Yes — yes."

It takes some moments to comprehend news like this. But when she did, her eyes flashed — I thought with terror.

"You will not see him," I begged.

"Yes — I will see him. I have something to say to him. I've had it to say a long while!"

"But you will not marry him, Jessonda! Surely you will not!"

"Marry him! *Mon Dieu!* why should I do such a dreadful thing?"

I sat down, breathing fast. Some taut spring in me went free.

"But you foolish boy," she said gently, "whatever made you think I would?"

I buried my face in my hands lest she see the full relief that was in it.

"That morning — after your grandfather's death — you — you said so."

"But I was beside myself with grief then. You should not have remembered such wild words."

"I remember all your words," I announced.

"You did n't remember when I asked you to come here to the labyrinth this morning."

I lifted my face and met her eyes that were suddenly merry. We seemed both of us to have forgotten Giraldi.

"Jessonda," I cried, "you have n't been here all this while — waiting for me?"

"I have, indeed."

"But I had my dinner — out at Feiba Pevelli — long ago."

"Yes, gallant youth!"

"I had to go there early this morning. Feiba Pevelli is disbanded. Robert-Dale asked me to arrange the settlements. Jessonda, you know I would have come if I could."

"Yes. That's why I waited."

"But you must come at once. I will get you something at the tavern kitchen."

She shook her curly head, her merry eyes still meeting mine.

"No; we are here now. My breakfast was late. I would rather stay — if you will."

Then she fell silent, looking dreamily out of the vine-clad door. A honeysuckle in its autumn bloom filled the place with unearthly memory of spring. I never meet that odor, even now, without a startling joy.

"You will not fret over his coming?" I asked.

"No, oh, no, I was not thinking of him."

Her shy, soft laughter thrilled me with some hidden beauty of its mood which I could not comprehend. All our old comradeship was in it. She was giving me that again, and I would not violate it this time — if I could help it.

"Seth," she said, watching a bee that boomed softly in the vine, "have you ever thought of coming to Chickasaw?"

"Yes," I answered, a little surprised that she should ask me this. "I would like to study your community."

"But — to take part in the work. You understand the forest and the negro in a way that I cannot."

"Could I help?" I asked.

"Yes," she said; "you most of all could help me."

"Then I will come," I said, trembling. But I said no more.

There was silence between us again which I found full of peace. Suddenly she turned toward me, looking frankly into my face.

"I really came here," she said, "to say something to you, Seth. I am finding it very hard to say."

"It should not be hard," I told her, with a shadow of anxiety.

"No," she answered; "not after yesterday."

She bowed her head very low. I could see there was no courage in her. It was so she had always looked when about to send me away from her.

"I must say it now — to-day," she went on, — "that is why I waited. I never could have the courage again. I love you, Seth, and — and I want to take back — all that I used to say — otherwise."

Now, what could this mean, this unreal recitement? She said it flatly, apparently without emotion. I could not understand. She had taught me my bitter lesson too deeply and too long. I trembled as if she had struck me, but I could not believe.

"Jessonda," — I spoke brokenly, in a voice that was not mine,— "don't let some wild gratitude for yesterday trap you into this. It will be sorrow for you afterward. You — cannot be sure."

But she sprang up wildly. "You do not believe me!" she cried. "You do not believe me!"

"Dear Jessonda." But her speech cut me short.

"Yes, you think so, too! That is the cruel thing they all say about me — men and women, too — that I have no heart. Everybody said it until — until I almost thought so myself. They say a woman should not try to think. It is unnatural. It ruins her affection. They say this about me at everything I do or say. And they think I do not care. But you — you —" Her voice that had been like a sweet clarion broke quickly. "Oh, I was so sure that you believed in me." A low cry broke her speech and she was gone like a swallow out of the open door. I was instantly after her, but a great bush intervened between us. The labyrinth was a true maze. She disappeared and I could not find her anywhere. I dashed around green

corners calling her name — she was gone. And all the while that lonely cry of hers was filling my heart with the truth. Who could have guessed that back of her valiant deeds and dareful sayings was this woman's love and longing!

Then suddenly at a turn — she was there, standing before me in an alcove of yew like a straight saint in a niche. By this time I was in such panic that I fell on my knees before her in the manner of an old devotee, reverently kissing her hands.

"What were you saying, you dear, beautiful woman?" I cried. "Say it again, again!"

She bent over me, and I saw in her eyes the same wonderful look that had swept me yesterday at the evening gate.

"Oh, Seth, it is true," she said.

At which I rose up and took her in my arms and kissed her plentifully in fullness of joy.

How many, many things we had to tell each other — we who had so mysteriously come together in the vast sea of life!

"But how could you change so suddenly?" I asked her.

"But it was not sudden," she protested.

"No? Nor are thunderclaps nor little things like earthquakes, I suppose."

Then my lady said me this: "It was not a change at all. I loved you long before you thought of loving me."

"Now of all barefaced, audacious statements!" I cried, kissing the lips that could say such preposterous things.

"On that first morning when you consented to take me into the coach — I loved you."

"God bless you, you managed to conceal it most successfully."

"Did I not! When you were angry and would not speak — I loved you."

"How cruel and rough I was!"

"You think so, dearest, and all the while your kindness and high honor were showing through everything you did. And you wanted nothing, not even my friendship in return. That was why I was so eager to give it."

"Were you so eager to give it?"

"Yes; always, always!" Her voice was clear and curiously toned with the loveliness of her mood.

"When we came to Harmony and those happy days began, I kept telling myself that my gladness came from the new, kindly life. I thought I did not want anything more. Marriage had been urged upon me with such cruelty, and all which should have been sacred was made wrong and unkind."

"I know, I know," I said to her.

She went on with her dear telling. "When you asked me to love you, I had to close my heart — desperately — to keep you out. I was sure that I wanted to do alone what I had set to do. But — I could not stay near you and work with free mind. So — I had to go away."

"I knew that you were going because of me," I said.

"Yes, and I shall never forgive myself the hurt I saw in your face. Then down there at Chickasaw, when I would be piling brush or rolling logs with the negroes, I remembered it."

"Rolling logs with the negroes!" I cried, aghast.

"I used to go out in the wild forest to hunt the cows. The negroes were always letting them get away. Poor

slaves, they had had but little chance at trustworthiness. I always rather enjoyed these hunts because they set me free in the woods. Once I found the poor, patient cows browsing miles from home and drove them back in the soft afternoon light through the groves of oak and fern. I ought to have been very happy. But all at once the loneliness which had been growing upon me for weeks swept over me. I could hardly keep from tears. There was a terrible blank in all that I was trying to do. I remembered how full of content I had been in Harmony. 'If I go back for a while,' I thought, 'the change will restore my balance.' I made to myself the excuse that I must go to Albion to see Mr. Flower and finish some business with him. Next day — oh, very hastily — I set things in order and started away on my horse."

"All alone?" I queried.

"Yes. The others were afraid to have me go alone, for only a few days before I had had the sheriff forcibly expel Mr. Mailor from our premises. My people were afraid he might be lurking around."

"Why did you expel him?" I asked.

"Because he would n't go when I told him," she answered innocently. "You had asked me to have nothing to do with him. You were right, Seth. And he took my precious old Italian jewelry when he left."

"Yes; I knew that much."

"Then," she resumed, "I started on the long ride north through the great woods.[1] I was perfectly happy as I

[1] Several times this intrepid girl rode alone from Chickasaw, Tennessee, to New Harmony, Indiana, through a wilderness country with several rivers of swimming depth. The risks she ran were less than might be supposed as she was a first-rate swimmer and *équestrienne*." (Old Harmony pamphlet.)

rode long hours alone. I used to sing *sotto voce* as grandfather had taught me. Then one afternoon I recalled that you and Mr. Maclure had a plan of going to Europe together. I thought that you might be gone and I was filled with terror. I could not hasten fast enough through the woods. Oh, then I knew that it was to you I was hurrying and that I could not live without you. Then all the unthoughtful, cruel things I had done to you came back to me until I wept with sorrow."

"But, Jessonda, you should not have done that!"

"I should! I should!" she said impetuously. And at the recollection her wonderful eyes brimmed over. "When I came to Mr. Flower's at Albion, before I had even taken off my bonnet, I asked about you. And when I knew that you were at home — so near — I grew suddenly foolish and shy and did not know how I should go to you, or — or — speak to you or look into your dear face."

I was dumb with marveling at the strength of this new, tender spirit in her.

"But at last," she continued, "the tiresome business with Mr. Flower was through with and I was free to go. Then appeared that poor negro at Mr. Flower's and there was no one to help him. Oh, Seth, you have no idea how hard it was for me to start out with him, for I — I was coming to you that day."

"I know how hard it was for me to wait for you," I said; "just so hard that I could not do it."

I put my arm about her to lead her back to the *Gartenhaus*. We, of course, lost ourselves again and laughed and wandered like happy children until we found the clue.

The house had been built by the Rappites as an alle-

gory of Peace after the tortuous, blind ways of Life. Closed from the world, it was now to become the chapel of my faith. Here as we stood I saw a question growing in her face.

"What is it?" I asked her.

"When the fire came nearest, did you know that you kneeled quickly and took me with you?"

"No." At this bare mention the emotion of that moment welled up again. "I had to kneel," I said.

"Seth, what was it?"

I looked at her dumbly. "Something was there, Jessonda. I don't know what to call it."

"Dear Seth, you knew *then* what to call it," she said solemnly.

(People of our stamp do not readily pronounce the Name of God.)

"Did I call it that Name?" I wondered. "Then I was right."

My thoughts went back to my Quaker father and his visions. He had overlaid them with his quaint dogma. I was unable to talk about mine; yet beyond a doubt they were both alike.

I saw by the wistfulness of Jessonda's face that the Presence had not come to her as to me.

"I remember the glorious trees of last autumn," she said humbly, — "how some knew the golden spirit when it passed, and others — must do without."

CHAPTER LXIII

SETH WAY'S MARRIAGE LINES

We walked back in the softening light — for at last I had the grace to remember that my beloved had been without food for many hours. We skirted the village and came around by the dairy where Mrs. Malone gave her a great mug of milk.

"And it's you come back, Jessie Macleod!" she cried joyously.

"Yes, I'll be your dairymaid again if you wish."

"An' would n't I wish it, though! There's nary a soul of 'em washes the pans like you. But the Community's breakin' an' the cows will all be sold."

I kissed Jessonda every time Mrs. Malone turned her back in her work, and I fear I let my dear child recover herself as best she could.

"What are youse two whisperin' about there in the corner?" asked Mrs. Malone. "Ach, an' lovers be the same the wurrld over!"

Which proverb was as untrue as most proverbs are. But we were too happy to refute it.

"Will you come with me to Mr. Maclure?" I asked Jessonda as we came across the meadow. "I must tell him right away."

But before we came to Mr. Maclure we had settled some important affairs.

"Jessonda," I said, hesitating, "do you know that there is a preacher in town?"

"That means a sermon on Sunday. Perhaps I will reply to it."

For it was Harmony custom to welcome preachers of every description and to answer the discourse of each with approval or criticism as the spirit moved us — often a no small ordeal for them.

"Perhaps you will do something else, though," I ventured.

"What else?"

"Oh, Jessonda," I said in sudden earnest, "do you want to wait a whole month, or perhaps two months, until some other preacher comes? We may have to do that — unless you will marry me to-morrow."

"Then I will marry you to-morrow," she said at once.

"God bless your frank spirit!" I cried.

"Hush, some one will hear you!"

We were already in the fort-laboratory mounting the rough stone stairs. I think that Mr. Maclure in fact did hear me, for he looked at us very keenly when we came in.

"Dear me," he said; "what's this they are telling me about the fire and the gallant rescue?"

"It was not that way," I protested.

He greeted Jessonda with warmest welcome.

"Miss Jessie," he said, "I am glad to see you back. Seth, here, already looks as bright as a May morning."

"Mr. Maclure," I cried, too joyous to keep silence, "Jessonda and I are to be married to-morrow afternoon!"

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed, looking from one to the other of us. "You take my breath away!"

We talked together in happy confusion. My dear benefactor was overflowing with pleasure. Then I led

Jessonda to my work place in the corner of the lofty room. The wall was lined high with specimen cases.

"Open these drawers," I told her. "Here are my most interesting specimens."

Together we stood pulling forth the trays which held my Silurian corals. These I have always thought the most startling of all geological treasures. Earlier than this period the fossils are dulled with infinite age and distorted with pressure. But with the Silurian Age the corals and crinoids burst forth sharp and fresh as if the Creator had made them yesterday.

Jessonda passed intently from one to the other, making her original and interesting comments.

"But what is this?" she exclaimed, — "this legal paper addressed to me?"

"Suppose you open it," I suggested.

Like a Christmas child she unfolded it.

"But I don't understand," she said, glancing at the paper and stopping to question my face; "is this a letter you have written me?"

"No," I said; "it is my marriage promise. I don't know how I had the courage to write it — for I wrote it months ago."

She still seemed to question, so I went on:

"One day Robert-Dale and I talked together about you and how you had a right to your own perilous daring. And then I got him to show me those laws which even out here in this new Indiana give a woman no rights to her own property or her own sacred person. As I came home picturing you with your character subject to such laws, I grew very indignant. I tried to meditate what I ought to do to make you free of them if" — I smiled into her face

— "if I should ever have the chance. That night, very late, I came up here, lighted my candle, and wrote out this."

"You good, generous man," she called me with tears; for she had seen what the paper contained. "Read it for me, Seth. You see I cannot."

So I read it to her in a low voice, not disturbing Mr. Maclure at his work:

Marriage Lines

This day I enter into a matrimonial engagement with Jessonda Lucrezia Maria Giovanni Battista Macleod, a young woman whose opinions in all important subjects, and whose mode of thinking and feeling, coincide more intimately with my own than do those of any other individual with whom I am acquainted.

We contract a legal marriage, for we desire a tranquil life, in so far as it can be obtained without a sacrifice of principle.

We have selected the simplest ceremony which custom and the laws of the State recognize and which in consequence of the liberality of these laws involves not the necessity of calling in the aid of a member of the clerical profession —

"But we *are* calling a preacher," she interrupted.

"I thought that, perhaps you would wish one, though when I wrote I had in mind the Quaker way."

"Yes," she answered, "that is better, we will have it the Quaker way. Your father was a Quaker, Seth. Your own father and mother must have been married in that way."

"Yes, they were," I said. And taking her hand in mine I pursued my reading:

— a profession, the authority of which we do not recognize, and the influence of which we are led to consider often injurious to

society. The Quaker ceremony, too, involves not the repeating of those forms which we deem offensive, inasmuch as they outrage the principles of human Liberty and Equality, by conferring rights and imposing duties unequally on the sexes.

The ceremony which we have chosen consists simply in the signature by each of us of a written contract in which we agree to take each other as husband and wife according to the laws of the State of Indiana, our signatures being attested by those of all our friends who may be present.

Of the *unjust rights* which, in virtue of this ceremony, a iniquitous law tacitly gives me over the person and property of another, I cannot legally, but I *can morally*, divest myself. And I hereby earnestly desire to be considered by others as utterly divested, now and during the rest of my life, of any such rights — the barbarous relics of a feudal and despotic system, soon destined in the onward course of improvement to be wholly swept away, and the existence of which is a tacit insult to the good sense and good feeling of the present comparatively civilized age.

I now set down these sentiments on paper as a simple record of the views and feelings with which I enter into an engagement, important in whatever light we consider it — views and feelings which I believe to be shared by her who is to become my wife.

SETH WAY.

"Jessonda," I said, as I folded the paper with unsteady hands, "whatever you may receive from priest or magistrate, these will be your true marriage lines." [1]

"Yes, oh, yes," she whispered. Then suddenly she took the paper from my hand and ran with it to Mr. Maclure.

"Look!" she cried, her eyes yet bright with their tears. "See what your dear, good son wrote for me long ago when I did not deserve it."

[1] Note by Columbine Way:
You can see these marriage lines in the files of the *New Harmony Gazette* in our Public Library.

Maclure adjusted his glasses and read it smiling — puzzled, of course. He stopped midway.

"But this date," he declared, "is six months back. Seth Way, this is the most audacious piece of presumption I ever heard of!"

"It is not, it is not!" cried Jessonda. "They are the most honest, beautiful words a lover ever penned!"

Then she stopped in confusion.

Maclure ceased smiling, and I saw his face soften as he looked at my darling's flushed cheeks and glad eyes.

"Jessie Macleod," he said, "I am going to take back something that I have said about you. Seth can tell you what it is. You are worthy of your happiness, though you have won the heart of the most honorable young man I know."

"Now you shall be our witness," said Jessonda, and, taking the pen from Maclure's desk, she wrote, in her fine bold hand, —

I gratefully concur in these sentiments.
Jessonda Lucrezia Maria Giovanni Battista Macleod.

And handed it over for him to sign.

CHAPTER LXIV

CONCERNING THE CURIOUS LENGTH OF SOME DAYS IN HARMONY

It was after supper before I realized that even in such a state of felicity it was needful to bestow some attention upon practical matters — Giraldi, among others. I made no doubt that he had searched in many places for his lost lady, but for obvious reasons had overlooked the labyrinth, the cow-stable, and the geological laboratory.

"I will go to him now," I said rising.

"But it is I who must go, Seth, and speak my mind."

"Yes, of course."

We started at once for the tavern.

"Oh, Seth," she said, "I did not know how safe it would feel to be two of us instead of one." And I blessed her again for that saying.

We sat in the tavern parlor while Mr. Evans went up and knocked at a door. At once the man came down full of rage, as was natural after his fruitless day. I fully meant to stand aside during the conversation. But when he shut the door behind him and strode over to Jessonda, his big eyes fixed on her face, I stepped involuntarily between them.

"Your speech is not with Miss Macleod. It is with me," I said.

"*Maledizione,*" he said, — or some useless sort of foreign oath, — and tried to push me aside. Unexpectedly Jessonda shrank away from him and hid her face.

"*Accidente.* And why shall I speak with you?"

"Because," I said, — and my voice sank, instinctively happy with the words, — "because Miss Macleod tomorrow will be my wife."

"*Mine*, you mean!" he began intensely.

I let him finish his harangue and speak out his foolishness. This lady, he declared, "was a Miss Di Baia of Naples, not Miss Macleod. The grandfather, her sole guardian, had arranged the marriage with him — Giraldi — Nay, more, he had already published the legal banns. Signorina Di Baia was possibly of the impression that her grandfather was in America. But as a matter of fact he was at this moment in Italy — in Naples itself.

"Signorina Di Baia," he finished, "may not think me her good friend. But I am. For I have come with greatest difficulty to warn her of a most threatening danger which hangs over Signor Di Baia. I only can avert it and the Signorina knows perfectly well that I can avert it only under certain conditions."

I had never heard anybody tell such a complicated, ingenious lie. The thing was interesting and curiously convincing, spoken so frankly.

I heard Jessonda breathe quickly. "Thank God, he is safe!"

"You think that Signor Di Baia is safe!" he sneered.

But I could not let him address her.

"Man, Signor Di Baia is dead. He died here in his granddaughter's arms. Your words are foolish."

His eyes widened. It was a face of terrible changes.

"But — but —" he began.

"No, not that, either," I interrupted. "Signor Di Baia told us plainly that his granddaughter was not mar-

ried to you, and also that he no longer desired it. There is no mystery whatever. You will find that your silly mysteries and plots will not thrive in America."

I turned quickly to Jessonda. "Come away," I said, my voice suddenly trembling. "I should have done this alone."

"Oh, Seth," she said as we came out upon the street, "I had forgotten how — how bestial and coarse the man was. This Harmony life, and you, had made me forget that. And the sight of his face brought back all the horror of the old Neapolitan life — and grandfather's anger, too."

"Well, I'm glad that is over with," I said devoutly.

There was even yet more to this incomparable day. The days in Harmony are always twice as long as anywhere else. (This is a curious phenomenon and should be studied. Let him who does not believe it journey to New Harmony or any other serene little town and prove it for himself.) There was the walk home with Jessonda; the persuading her back to a quiet mind; and the good-night in the starlight over the tiny low gate; and sometimes "good-night" takes a long while to say.

"Do you know, Seth," she said after a wide silence, "I am afraid that there is one who will have sorrow from this marriage of ours."

"Surely not! What do you mean?"

"I mean little Columbine. I do not believe you know how the child loves you."

"Of course she does."

"Think what your friendship has done for the little girl."

"What hers has done for me, rather. I could n't have

got along at all without her those first days in Harmony. The child taught me what no great teacher, even Maclure, could. Jessonda, this is the first foolish thing I ever heard you say."

"But, Colley has been jealous of me. I have tried in every way to win her. She has a rare voice, but she has never let me teach her. And one evening I saw her looking at us with tears in her eyes."

I was enough convinced to answer, "Well, then, I'll see Colley the first thing in the morning."

"That is right," she declared. "I was afraid you might leave the task to some one else."

"But she's *my* friend, you know," I answered in troubled tones.

CHAPTER LXV

THE TWO COLUMBINES

So it was that, early on my marriage morning, I sought out Columbine and went for a walk with her to the hills.

"Columbine," I said, stopping on the brow of Indian Mound, "your Saint George has something to tell you. I ought to have told you the very first, but I have already told Mr. Maclure."

"Is it a secret?" she asked, with that joyous skip that went to my heart rather miserably at this juncture.

"It won't be a secret long — perhaps not more than an hour. And after Aunt Sammy finds it out, it won't be a secret two minutes."

"Two weenty seconds you mean! Aunt Sammy can't keep a secret — at all. But I can."

I sat down on a log and drew her to me by both her tiny hands. I found it a difficult thing to say to a child, and I began to dread the hurt that I might give her. But I said it at last.

"Dear Columbine, Miss Macleod is going to be my wife to-day — this afternoon. I want you to be glad with us to-day."

I think I must have had my head down, for I found her stooping to peer up into my face like a little squirrel.

"Is there goin' to be a weddin'?" she queried.

"Yes, Colley."

"But does that Miss Jessie love you, really, truly, cross her heart?"

"Oh, dear little girl, she does," I said fervently.

"Oh, goody, goody, gladness!"

With which enthusiastic comment her little hands flew up, her fingers snapping for castanets, and she twirled and danced on her tiptoes, laughing with delight.

I swallowed my anxieties with great suddenness.

"You little rogue," I cried, catching her in my arms. "What do you mean by being so gleeful over disposing of me?"

"It ain't disposin' of you," she said. "But Miss Jessie was *so* mean. She would n't love you, an' she *would n't.* An' evveybody else had a sweetheart but only just you, an' you looked so — so unpleased."

"I certainly was 'unpleased.'"

"An' now she's goin' to marry, marry, marry you, like a story book an' a song!"

How little we had followed the fancies of this poet-hearted child!

Then she put me through a catechism of her own sweet making.

"Will I go to the weddin'?"

"Yes, at three o'clock."

"An' after three o'clock will she be your wife forever 'n ever?"

"Dear child, yes," I said, with a quick-drawn breath.

"An' after that will you be old married folks like Mr. and Mrs. Chapelsmith?"

"I hope not!"

"But I *mean,*" she explained, "will you live not any more in the big school, but in one of the little married houses?"

"Perhaps so."

"An' after that if a little, little girl ever comes to your house, will you name her 'Columbine' after me because I am little too?"

"Columbine, Columbine!" I cried.

And, dear daughter, — for whom all this is written down, — I believe it was your name rather than hers that I called. For surely this was the first distant adumbration of a thought of you.

CHAPTER LXVI

IN WHICH THE NEW COLUMBINE BIDS US ALL GODSPEED

YES, the wedding was at three o'clock as little Aunt Columbine was promised. It was a Community wedding, which means that first father and mother (I should say, Seth and Jessonda) stood up, and took each other by the hand for husband and wife before the company. Then they renounced all unequal rights which the State gave to either of them through marriage. After this the company all signed a paper. And so they were married almost in the Quaker way.

There was a preacher present, who objected strongly. He said that since he was there he could not see why he should not perform the ceremony. He said it was a godless wedding. Then he preached a sermon to persuade them all to join his church, and told them that their souls would all be lost in hell.

Of course everybody knew better than that, except little Aunt Columbine, who cried bitterly, and could be comforted only by Seth himself.

Mr. Maclure gave them a horse and dearborn with which they went to Mammoth Cave, the place where all couples go from Harmony, since it is such a nice geological wedding tour.

But they came back to live in Harmony. And mother managed her community at Chickasaw through agents, visiting it at intervals to keep it running right. Here in

Harmony she is editor of the "Gazette" and writes articles and poems, and stories which I love to read. She goes away a great deal to lecture. But at home she sings. And all Harmony is sure that no voice, not even the great Jenny Lind's, is as beautiful as mother's.

Last spring she closed out her Chickasaw colony. Father said that it had fully accomplished its mission. For the emancipation of the slaves has now become a burning question with everybody. But it was a burning question in mother's mind when very few people thought of it at all. And she has spent almost all of her fortune in trying to find a way that would be fair to everybody.

At the end there were thirty slaves left at Chickasaw. Of course mother would not sell them, nor would she free them here in the States, where the black man lives in a sort of disgrace. So mother chartered a ship for sixteen hundred dollars to take her with her slaves to Hayti. Then at the very last minute father could not go. He received an important commission from the Government at Washington to explore a great region of mineral lands — eleven thousand square miles in Wisconsin and Minnesota. The work must be completed in the preposterously short time of twelve weeks; that is, before winter. It was like the task which Venus or the wicked stepmother sets the unhappy princess in the fairy-tales.

Everybody said it could not be done — everybody except mother, who went about the house with shining eyes, saying, "How splendid! How splendid!"

She and father spent long hours together in the laboratory of the old fort planning the campaign — for campaign it was.

The region was wild and almost unknown. Father must

buy great quantities of provisions, tents, and equipment, and engage more than a hundred assistants, whom he must instruct in the elementary principles of geology and organize them into twenty-four corps. He decided to charter a steamboat at St. Louis to take his party up the Mississippi which would become a traveling geological school.

After placing these corps at the points where they were to start their work, father proposed to travel back and forth many times across the wide region to inspect and work.

In the midst of all this planning mother was obliged to hurry away to Hayti.

Then, oh, what prodigious preparation! Everybody in town dropped his own work to help the expedition off. Father pushed and directed everything with that wonderful energy of his which is so surprising in one so gentle. Aunt Columbine and I and the neighbors sewed thousands of specimen-bags.

At last, at six o'clock one summer morning, they started — a mighty caravan — father and what helpers he could gather here, in their carriages; pack-mules and horses and covered provision wagons and a company of cooks and laborers — such excitement and so many good-byes!

Then suddenly Aunt Columbine and I were left alone in the great mansion school. Aunt Columbine is David-Dale Owen's wife, you know. So we were the two lonely ones together, for David-Dale was not yet returned from Philadelphia. We were alone for three months.

Then, strangely enough, father and mother arrived home on the same day. Mother had left her black people well bestowed in the hands of the King of Hayti and had come

safely over the sea. And father returned with much treasure of knowledge and specimens. He had completed his survey in eleven weeks instead of twelve. His district proved to be one of the richest mineral regions yet known in the world.

There was so much to tell — of mother's long, dangerous voyages, of Hayti and the tropics — of father's Western tract, its great rivers, its Indians, and its treasures, so that we talked for very happiness all day and most of the night.

But when Aunt Columbine had gone to her room and we three stood together in the wide hall and mother threw her arms around us both, we found that we were all three in tears with the joy of being together again.

And so we live on here in New Harmony, far away from the rest of the world, yet full of purpose and adventure.

Mr. Lesueur still lives in Harmony, the Neefs (who returned almost at once), the Frétageots, Thomas Say the entomologist, and his wife, who was Lucy Sistaire. Mr. Maclure is our guiding spirit, of course, whenever he is here. But he goes on many distant travels. Just now he is in Mexico, and he has stayed so long that father begins to fear that he is ill. If he does not come home soon, father is going down there after him to fetch him home.

Mr. William Owen died when I was a little girl, but Robert-Dale, David, and Richard are married and have many children, and the town is full of young folk of my age. Jane Fauntleroy, Robert Owen's only daughter, came to New Harmony after the Community ended. She teaches

her own family every morning, and we young folks have always had the privilege of studying along with them.

Robert Owen himself comes often from Europe to see his children and grandchildren. He never seems to think the journey long, though he is now an old man. Never could there be a more loving and devoted family. I think that all through the town we feel their family love, and everybody is kinder because of it.

The town is always full of geologists, who come as assistants to father and David-Dale Owen. Many of them stay here to live. Famous visitors come to us, not many at a time, but one by one so we can enjoy each, — famous scientists and scholars from England and Europe, who bring to us wonderful new interests from afar. For excepting Philadelphia our little Harmony is now the greatest center of science in the United States.

Meanwhile we make our own merriments — the liveliest theatricals, in which young and old take part; picnics and riding parties; the most wonderful concerts and dances — always dances, to which we go in calico and muslin and everybody is at home and abed by ten o'clock. Mother says there is much vain show in the cities which never touches us here. We young folk of to-day think we have the best times in the world. But if we ask the grown folk of New Harmony what was the happiest time of their lives, they always — *all of them* — answer, smiling as from memories which we cannot understand, — "In Community Days."

THE END

NOTE

The reader will see that in order to compress the life of the New Harmony Community into a readable story the writer has purloined for "Seth Way" the scientific achievements of both Thomas Say and David Dale Owen, and has left these famous men to appear as little more than names.

Thomas Say was an older man and came to New Harmony in the plenitude of his powers. He was adored by his friends. They say such things of him as: "He loved his neighbor better than himself, and never had an enemy." "His integrity was enormous, his truth-telling perfect." "His extreme modesty was his only fault."

Say not only classified an unprecedented number of species, but he was so accurate an observer that almost none of his descriptions or classifications have ever been questioned.

Say was a conchologist, entomologist, and anthropologist. The writer has appropriated for "Seth Way" his conchology and David Dale Owen's geology, and has even had the effrontery to ascribe to him New Harmony's most notable geological feat, namely: Owen's survey of the Minnesota and Wisconsin mineral lands in 1840. The article on Old Beach Lines referred to in Chapter XL was written by C. U. Shepard.

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